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INSIDE

OFF THE RECORD

NFL Scouts Dish on All 32 Teams

Looking for a Sleeper? Look at the Schedule

5 Lessons of the Pats Dynasty

15 Things to Watch in 2017

PLUS

MARSHALL'S PLAN

Mentor OBJ

AARON RODGERS'

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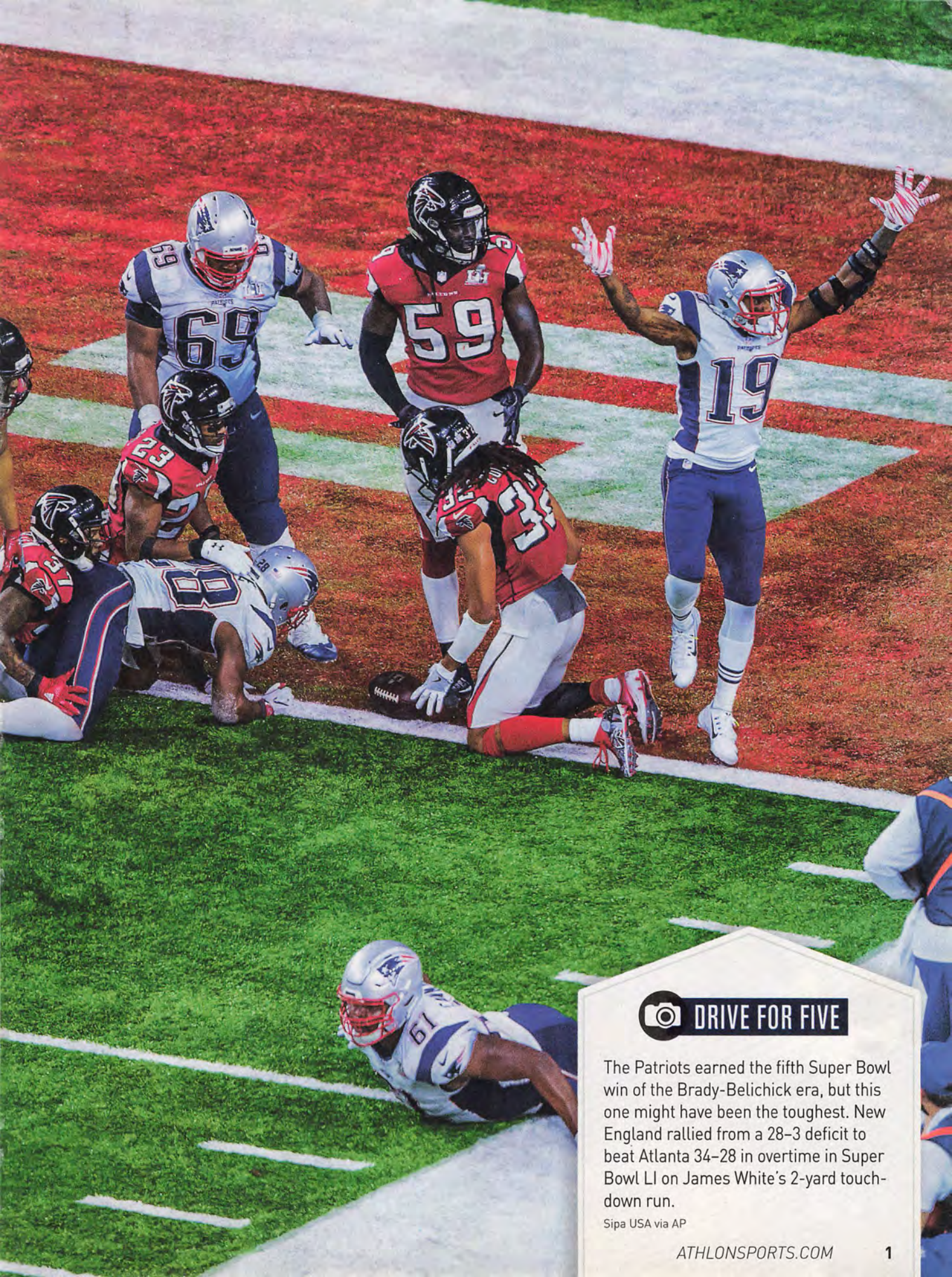
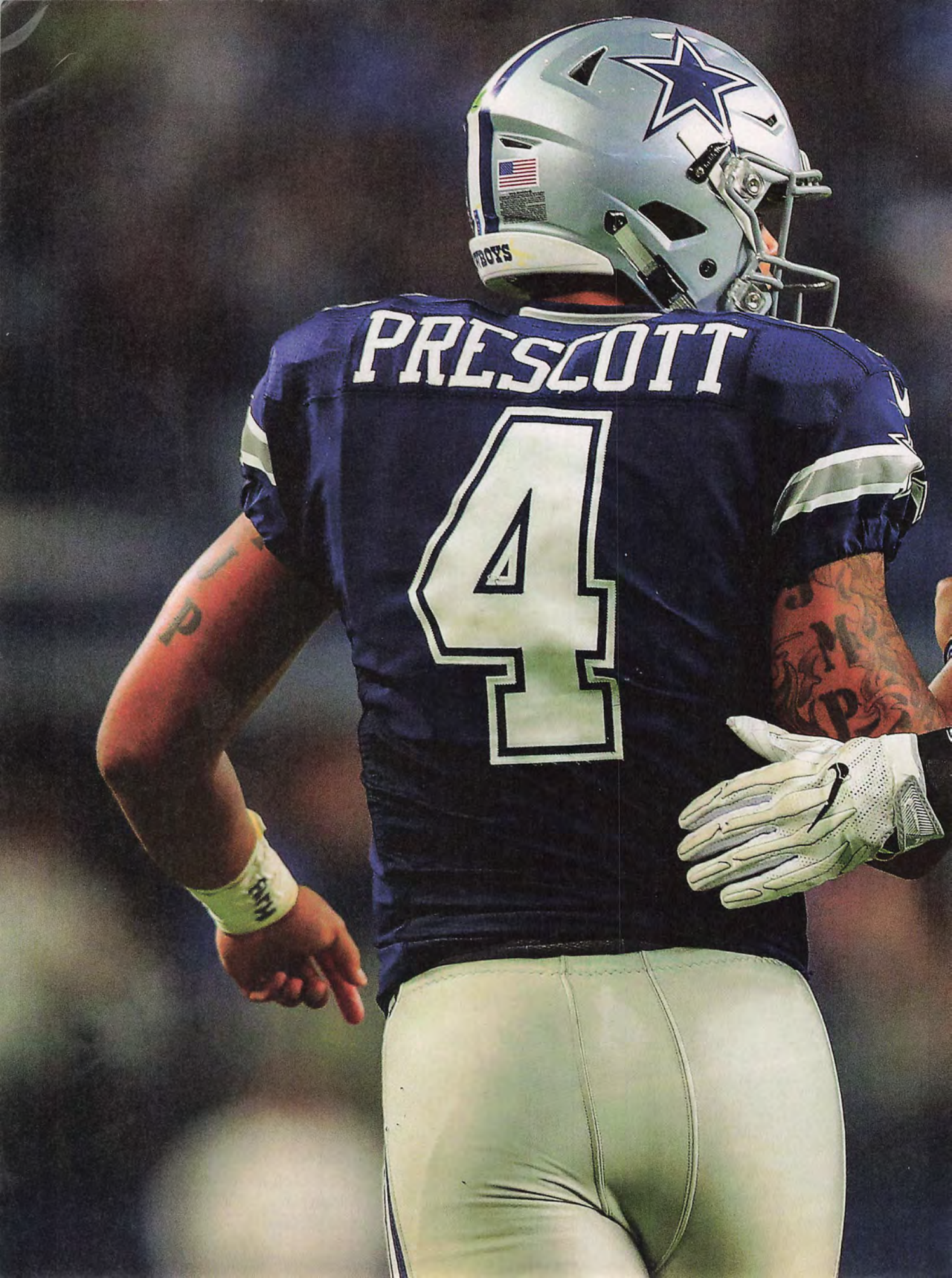
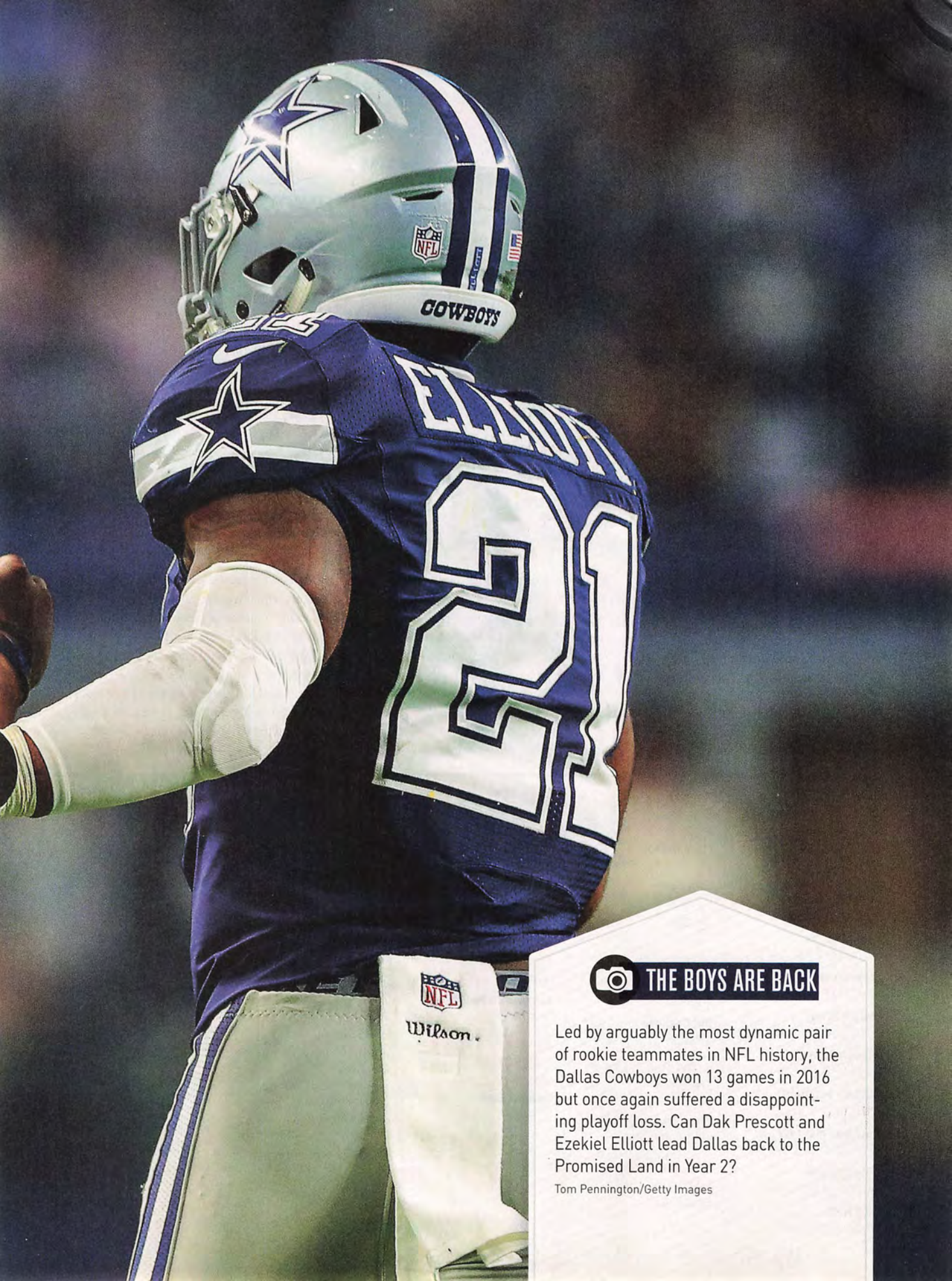


DRIVE FOR FIVE

The Patriots earned the fifth Super Bowl win of the Brady-Belichick era, but this one might have been the toughest. New England rallied from a 28–3 deficit to beat Atlanta 34–28 in overtime in Super Bowl LI on James White's 2-yard touchdown run.

Sipa USA via AP


PRESCOTT
4



THE BOYS ARE BACK

Led by arguably the most dynamic pair of rookie teammates in NFL history, the Dallas Cowboys won 13 games in 2016 but once again suffered a disappointing playoff loss. Can Dak Prescott and Ezekiel Elliott lead Dallas back to the Promised Land in Year 2?

Tom Pennington/Getty Images

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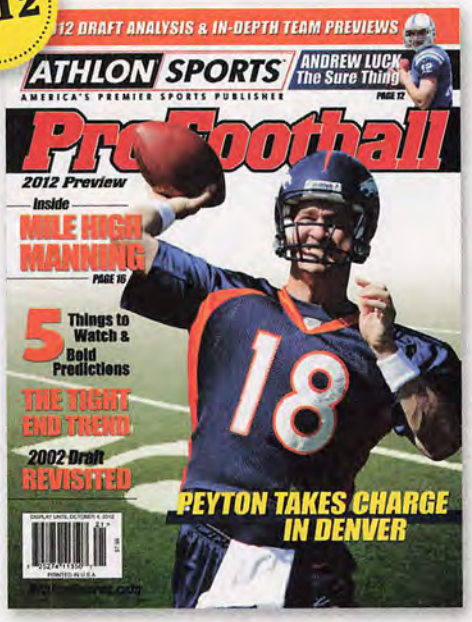
2012



One of the fun things about being in the preseason predictions business is getting to analyze once and future superstars as they reach pivotal moments in their careers. We're not always right in our projections, but I think it's safe to say we hit the mark with these two.

In 2007, Tony Romo was coming off a 10-game audition as the Cowboys' starting quarterback and was about to embark on his first full season as the sheriff in Big D. The jury was still out on Romo, who went a rather pedestrian 6–4 in 2006 after replacing Drew Bledsoe and then blew the 'Boys' playoff appearance with a fumbled snap on the potential game-winning field goal in a Wild Card loss to Seattle. Still, we could sense Dallas rallying around its young phenom. Now, a decade later, the Cowboys have moved on to another young phenom, but they won't soon forget a quarterback who won 78 games and whose career passer rating of 97.1 is fourth best all time.

Peyton Manning to Denver seemed like a safer bet, but remember — he was coming off a missed season following neck surgery. There was speculation that one good hit could endanger not only his career, but also his long-term health. Still, we had a feeling that Manning and the Denver offense were a match made in Mile-High heaven, and four largely spectacular seasons later, Peyton rode into the sunset, his legacy enhanced by his 45–12 record in Denver — and our faith in him rewarded.

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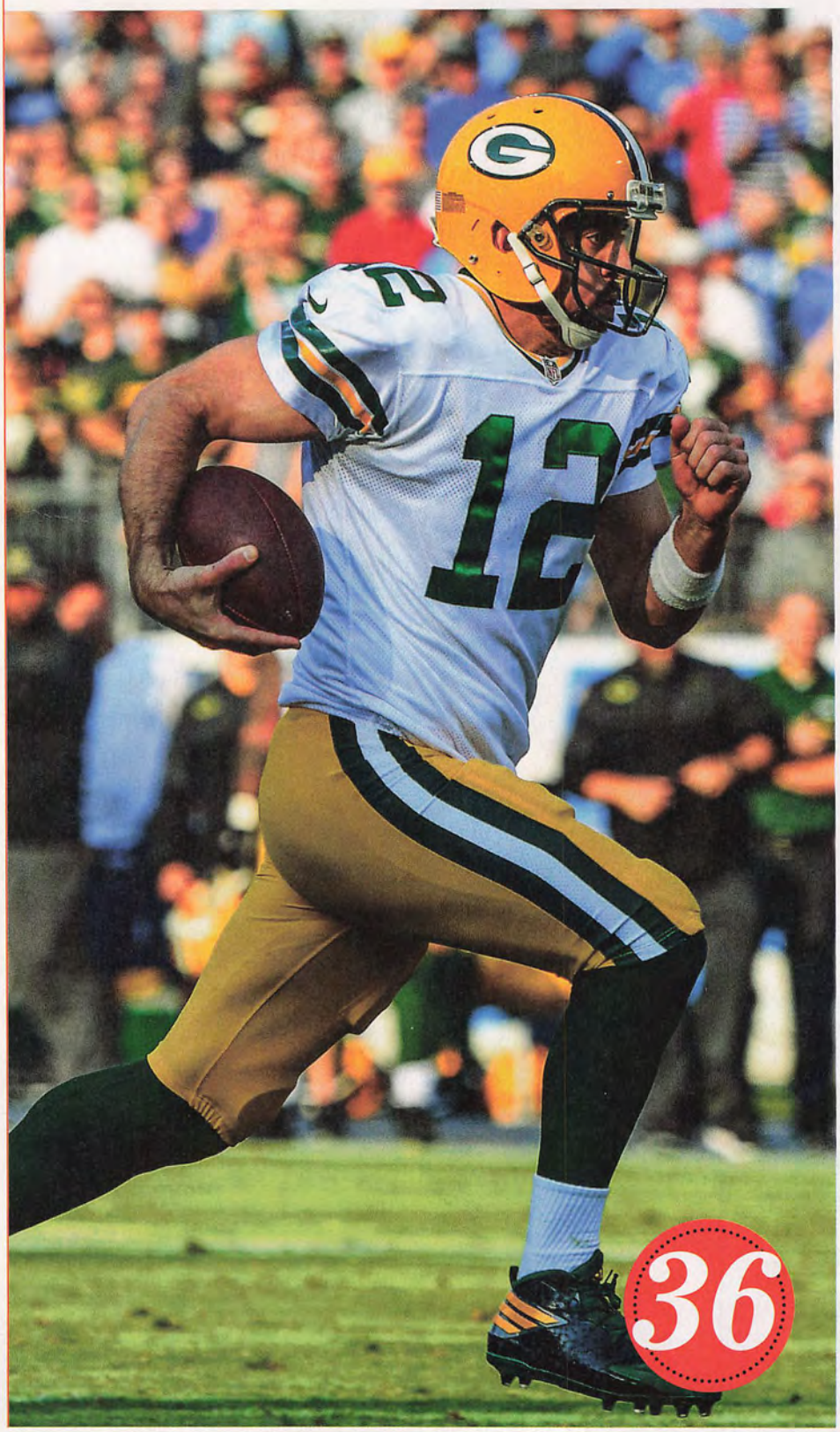
CONTENTS



10
15 THINGS TO WATCH IN 2017
Brady's encore, Newton's bounce-back and more.

16
NUMBERS TO KNOW FROM 2016
Eight numbers that shaped the 2016 season.

18
PLAYER RANKINGS

30
COACHING CAROUSEL
Six NFL franchises are under new leadership.

32
RIGHT ON SCHEDULE
Looking to identify a sleeper? Check the schedules.

34
THE PATRIOTS WAY
Five analytical lessons from the New England dynasty.

36
AARON RODGERS' FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH
The Packers' QB is defying Father Time.

40
TERRIFIC TRIO
The Giants finally have three legitimate options for Eli Manning.

42
IRON MAN
Joe Thomas is a rock of stability for an unstable franchise.

44
ONE SHINING MOMENT
These players will never forget their solitary NFL touchdowns.

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CONTENTS

48
2007 DRAFT REVISITED
A few future Hall of Famers and one all-time bust.

54
2017 DRAFT RECAP
Another eventful draft weekend saw some bold moves.

62
2018 DRAFT: A LOOK AHEAD
What college stars will hear their names called next year?

64
COLLEGE PREVIEW
For once, Alabama has some unfinished business.

66
FANTASY BIG BOARD
David Johnson has joined the elite, but is he No. 1?

80
AFC PREDICTIONS

162
NFL SCHEDULES

164
NFC PREDICTIONS

246
SIDELINE SPIRIT

252
2016 NFL STATS

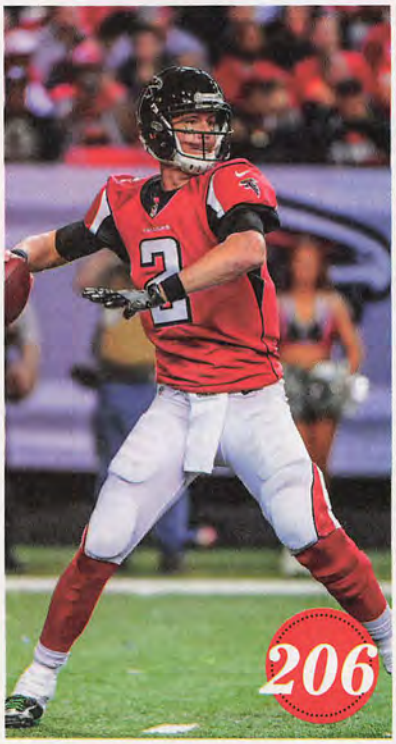
256
THE BACK PAGE

AFC

EAST		SOUTH	
82	Buffalo	122	Houston
87	Miami	127	Indianapolis
92	New England	132	Jacksonville
97	N.Y. Jets	137	Tennessee
NORTH		**WEST**	
102	Baltimore	142	Denver
107	Cincinnati	147	Kansas City
112	Cleveland	152	L.A. Chargers
117	Pittsburgh	157	Oakland

NFC

EAST		SOUTH	
166	Dallas	206	Atlanta
171	N.Y. Giants	211	Carolina
176	Philadelphia	216	New Orleans
181	Washington	221	Tampa Bay
NORTH		**WEST**	
186	Chicago	226	Arizona
191	Detroit	231	L.A. Rams
196	Green Bay	236	San Francisco
201	Minnesota	241	Seattle



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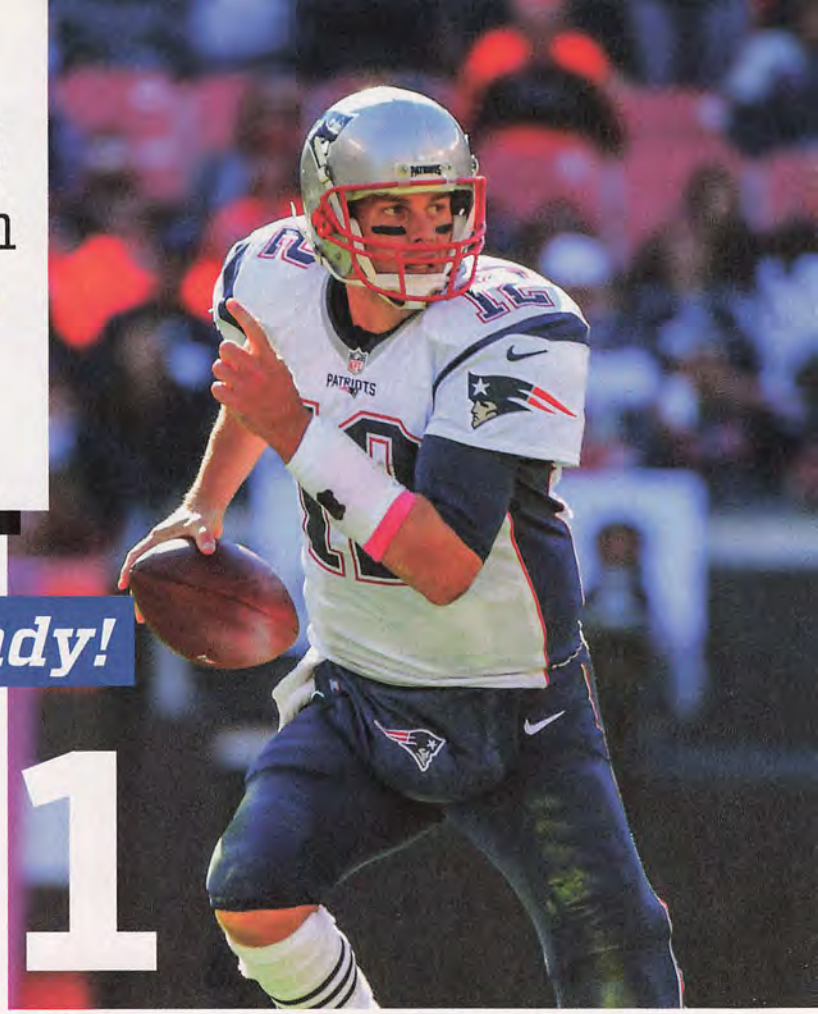
15 Things to Watch in 2017

BY CHAREAN WILLIAMS



1 Brady! Brady! Brady!

Tom Brady seemingly has it all. He won his fifth Super Bowl ring and fourth Super Bowl MVP Award last season. What more could the Patriots quarterback want? Well, a sixth Super Bowl ring, for starters.

Brady, who turns 40 this summer, vows to play into his mid-40s. Does anyone dare doubt him?

This marks Brady's 18th season, and with a contract that runs through 2019, he could end up playing for the same franchise for 20 years. Jason Hanson holds the NFL record, having played 21 seasons with the Lions, while Jackie Slater spent 20 seasons with the Rams and Darrell Green 20 years with the Redskins.

Brady is aging like a fine wine. Despite a four-game suspension last season, he finished second in MVP voting to Matt Ryan. He ranks fourth in career passing yards, passing completions and passing touchdowns and third in passer rating.

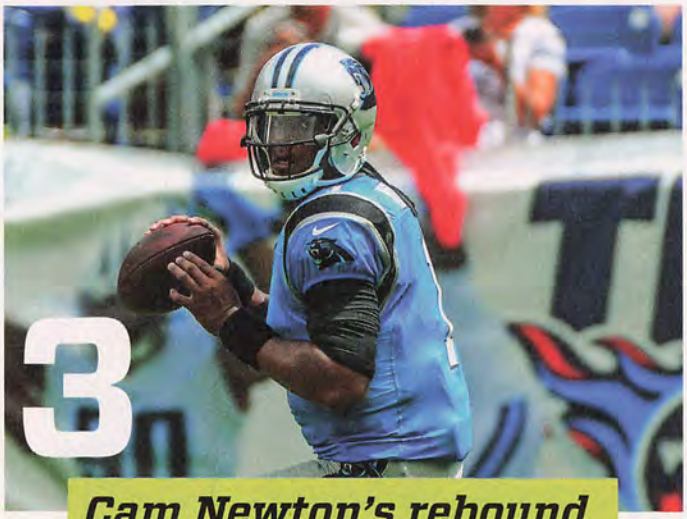
Only three quarterbacks — Brett Favre, Warren Moon and Vinny Testaverde — have ever thrown for 3,000-plus yards after their 40th birthday. Only two — Favre and Moon — made the Pro Bowl after hitting the big 4-0. Brady seems a solid bet to join those two exclusive clubs this season.

2 Repeat after Patriots

The Patriots won their fifth Super Bowl title in a 16-year dynasty that has seen New England go 196–60 in the regular season and 25–9 in the postseason. Although it hardly seems possible, the Patriots appear to have gotten even better in the offseason.

In a case of the rich getting richer, the Patriots re-signed free agent Dont'a Hightower, traded for receiver Brandin Cooks and pass rusher Kony Ealy and signed cornerback Stephon Gilmore. The Patriots have a clear bull's-eye on their back.

The Patriots are heavy favorites to win their ninth consecutive AFC East title and 14th in the past 15 years. They also are Super Bowl favorites. It's hard to bet against them, especially with No. 12 still at quarterback. Yet, the Patriots have repeated only once — winning Super Bowls following the 2003 and '04 seasons.



3 Cam Newton's rebound

Cam Newton went from Superman to Clark Kent in a year. He followed the MVP award in 2015 with the worst season of his career. The seven-year veteran completed a career-low 52.9 percent of his passes in 2016, threw 14 interceptions and posted a 75.8 passer rating that was ahead of only Brock Osweiler and Ryan Fitzpatrick.

The Panthers' porous offensive line couldn't protect Newton, who took 36 sacks and even more hits. Newton injured his throwing shoulder in Week 14 against the Chargers and underwent surgery to repair the partially torn rotator cuff on March 30. It only added injury to insult for the Panthers, who went from NFC champions to cellar dwellers.

Newton and the Panthers hope for a rebound in 2017 with fewer hits on Newton, fewer interceptions, more completions and more victories.

Newton, Brady: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Cousins, Watt: AP; Watson: AP

4 J.J. Watt's return

Texans defensive end J.J. Watt owns three NFL Defensive Player of the Year awards. No player has more, and only Hall of Fame linebacker Lawrence Taylor joins Watt in having three. Can Watt return to form to make it a record four this year?

Watt played in only three games last season, finishing with 1.5 sacks and eight tackles. His body was a wreck after two offseason surgeries in 2016 — one to repair his abductors and another to fix a herniated disk in his back — and he required yet another on his back in September that ended his season.

He has 76 sacks and 15 forced fumbles in six seasons, but the 28-year-old's body isn't aging well. With time off to rest and rehabilitate his injuries, Watt vows to return as strong as ever.

5 Kirk Cousins' future

The Redskins and Kirk Cousins still have not come to a long-term contract agreement. They appear no closer than a year ago. Cousins played last season under the $19.95 million franchise tag, the first quarterback since Drew Brees to do so, and the Redskins tagged Cousins for $23.94 million this season. They can tag him next year for $34.4 million.

Cousins' future remains uncertain as the Redskins still appear unwilling to commit to him long term. In 41 starts over five seasons, including all 32 the past two seasons, Cousins has a 19–21–1 record with 72 touchdowns and 42 interceptions.

Cousins will have an all-new receiving corps, with Pierre Garçon and DeSean Jackson departing in free agency. Josh Doctson, a first-round pick in 2016, returns after playing only two games as a rookie because of Achilles injuries, and the Redskins signed Terrelle Pryor and Brian Quick in free agency.

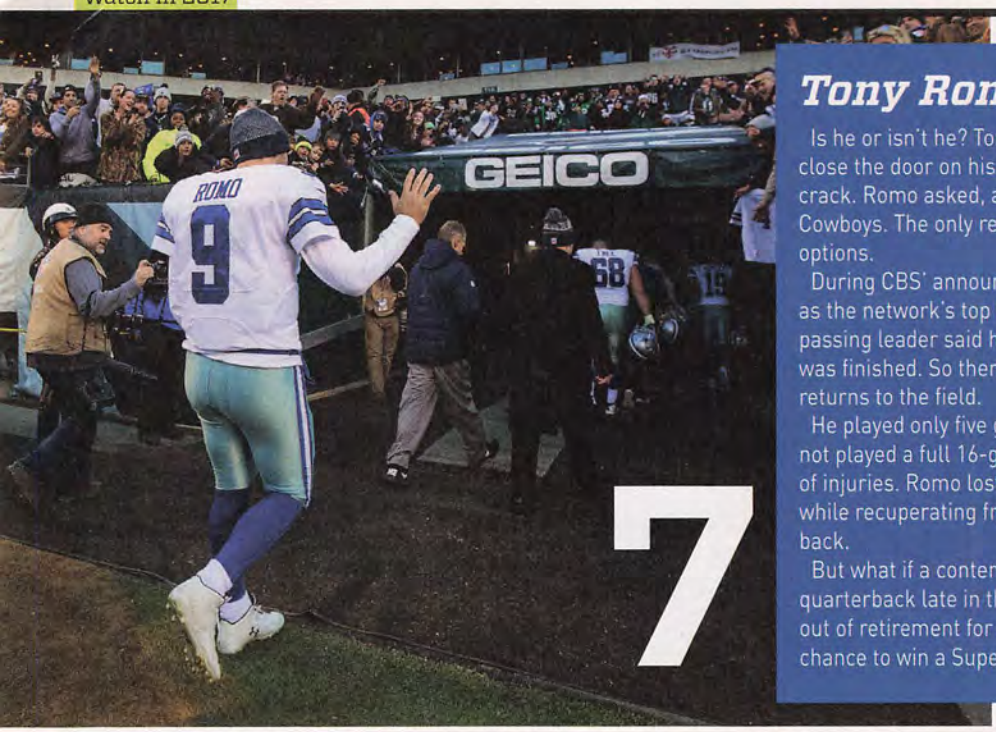
It is another audition season for Cousins, who will eventually get a long-term deal somewhere.

Houston's quarterback situation

The Texans have started 15 quarterbacks in their 15 seasons, including eight in Bill O'Brien's three seasons. They have drafted quarterbacks (David Carr, Tom Savage and now Deshaun Watson), traded for quarterbacks (Matt Schaub, Ryan Mallett) and signed quarterbacks (Ryan Fitzpatrick, Brian Hoyer, Brock Osweiler). The Texans' hunt for a franchise signal is seemingly endless.

The team had its sights set on signing Tony Romo before he decided to retire. Savage, who has two career starts, begins this season penciled in as the starter. But Houston traded up to get Watson, who passed for 10,168 career yards at Clemson and won a national championship. Will Savage keep the job or is he just keeping it warm until Watson is ready?

The Texans had the league's No. 1-ranked defense last season. They have Lamar Miller at running back and DeAndre Hopkins at receiver. And now, they believe, the organization finally has a quarterback who can make them contenders to win the Super Bowl.



7 Tony Romo's retirement?

Is he or isn't he? Tony Romo had a chance to completely close the door on his NFL career, but he left at least a crack. Romo asked, and received, his release from the Cowboys. The only reason for that is to leave open his options.

During CBS' announcement that Romo would take over as the network's top NFL analyst, the Cowboys' all-time passing leader said he was 99 percent sure his career was finished. So there remains a 1 percent chance Romo returns to the field.

He played only five games the past two seasons and has not played a full 16-game schedule since 2012 because of injuries. Romo lost his job to Dak Prescott last season while recuperating from a compression fracture in his back.

But what if a contender gets a season-ending injury to its quarterback late in the season? Could Romo be enticed out of retirement for a playoff run, giving him one last chance to win a Super Bowl?

8 What are the Bears doing?

Mike Glennon has a 5–13 record in four seasons as a part-time starter. Yet, the Bears signed him to a three-year, $43.5 million deal anyway. They then traded two third-round picks and a fourth-rounder to move up one spot to take Mitchell Trubisky, who went 8–5 in his only season as the starter at North Carolina. Chicago likely could have stayed put and still gotten the former Tar Heel.

It begs the question: What are the Bears doing?

The one smart thing Chicago did this offseason was move on from Jay Cutler. The 34-year-old quarterback went 51–51 in his eight seasons with the Bears and hasn't started all 16 games in a season since 2009 and played in only five last season.

The Bears, rolled the dice on the 27-year-old Glennon, giving him $18.5 million guaranteed, and they now will pay a pretty penny to sign Trubisky. But general manager Ryan Pace and coach John Fox might not be around long enough to see how the quarterback situation plays out unless the Bears can show signs of improvement this season — which isn't likely.

9 49ers' gamble

The 49ers are on their fourth head coach in four years. Clearly, they miss Jim Harbaugh, who was 44–19–1 and took the team to three straight NFC Championship Games and a Super Bowl. After hiring and firing both Jim Tomsula and Chip Kelly after one year, owner Jed York is convinced he finally has it right.

He hired **John Lynch** as general manager despite the TV analyst's lack of personnel experience and Kyle Shanahan as head coach despite no head coaching experience. York showed his faith in Lynch and Shanahan by giving both six-year contracts.

The 49ers, with more than $99 million in salary cap space, signed 18 free agents, including quarterbacks Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley. They traded for Baltimore center Jeremy Zuttah. They had one of the best drafts of any team, getting Solomon Thomas and Reuben Foster in the first round.

The 49ers haven't had a winning record since 2013, which was their third consecutive year with double-digit victories. They were last in offense in 2015 and last in defense in 2016. A turnaround isn't likely overnight, but it doesn't seem the 49ers can do worse.

Romo: Photo by Mitchell Leff/Getty Images; Glennon: Don Juan Moore/Getty Images; Lynch: AP

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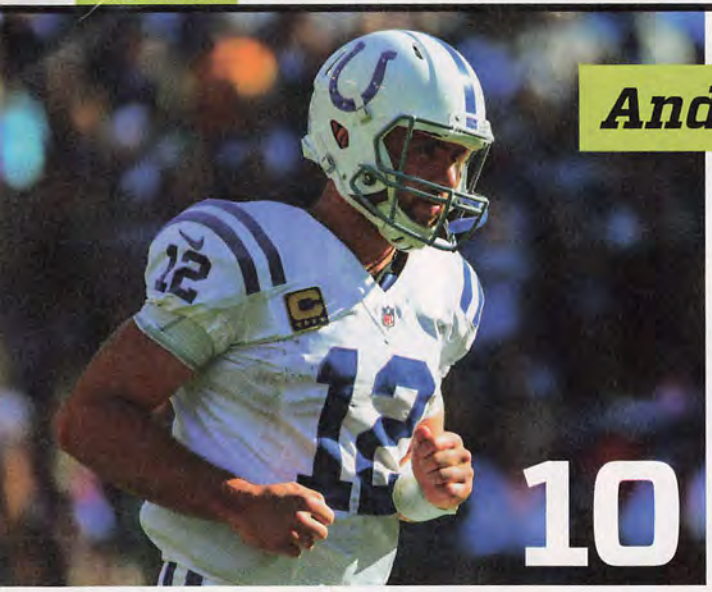
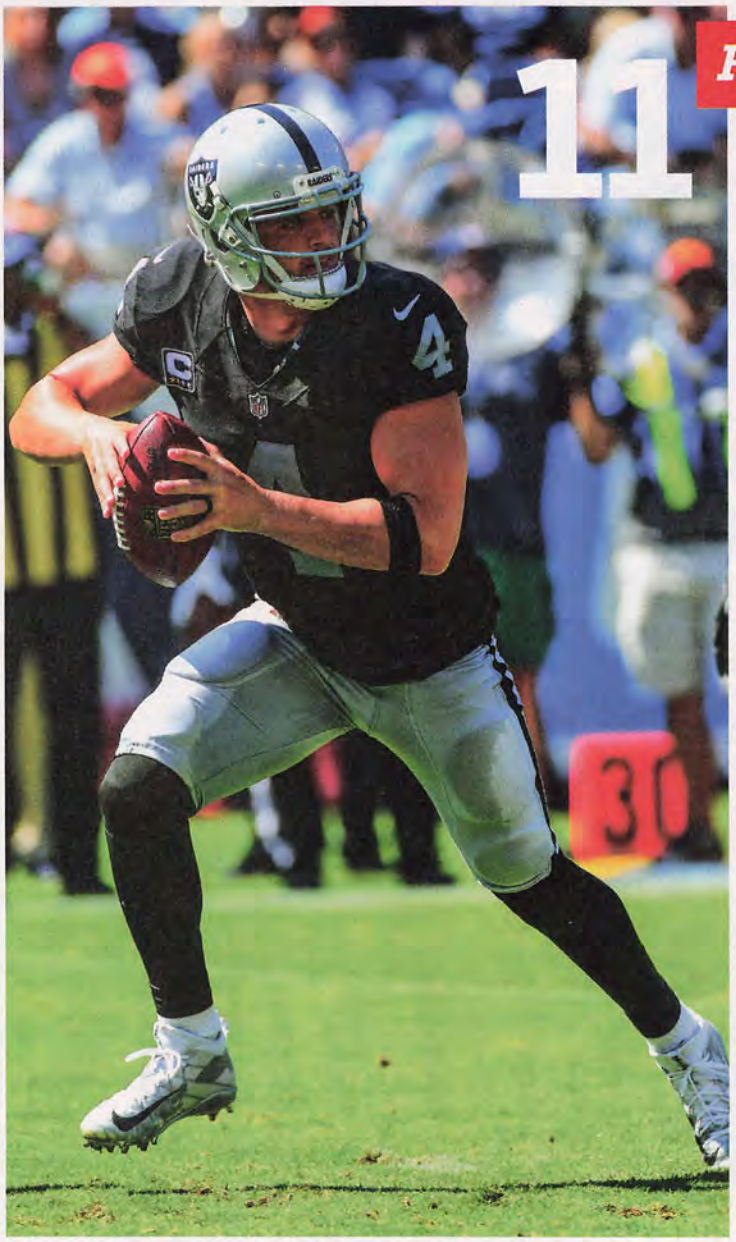


10 Andrew Luck's bad luck

In his first three seasons, Andrew Luck looked like the second coming of Peyton Manning. The Colts went 11–5 each season and earned playoff berths. In the two years since, Luck has battled injuries and the Colts have missed the playoffs with 8–8 records.

Luck hasn't ascended to "elite" yet and has missed 10 games with injuries over the past two seasons. But in his defense, the Colts have done little to help him. Luck tied his career high in taking 41 sacks behind Indianapolis' still-porous offensive line, and the Colts finished 30th in total defense.

Luck arguably had one of the best seasons in his five-year career in 2016, but he underwent surgery on his right shoulder in January. Luck does have time on his side. Manning didn't win a playoff game his first five seasons, going 0–3 in the postseason before finally reaching the AFC Championship Game in his sixth season.



11 Raiders' parade route?

With the Raiders announcing a move to Las Vegas, the question becomes: Will they win a Super Bowl in Oakland before leaving? The Raiders' playoff berth last season was their first since 2002. It didn't last long without **Derek Carr**. Carr fractured his right fibula in Week 16, leaving third-string rookie Connor Cook to make his first start against the Texans in the postseason. It didn't go well.

But the Raiders' future appears bright. Carr finished third in MVP voting; Khalil Mack was named Defensive Player of the Year; and the Raiders had an NFL-high seven Pro Bowlers. The Raiders will stay in the Oakland Coliseum for the 2017 and '18 seasons, likely playing in front of few sellouts, before moving to a $1.9 billion stadium in Las Vegas in 2020. Their 2019 home remains unclear.

If the Raiders win a Super Bowl before their move, would Oakland throw them a parade? Or would it happen on the Las Vegas Strip?

12 Los Angeles Chargers

After 15 years trying to get a new stadium in San Diego, Chargers owner Dean Spanos finally decided he was out of time and out of options. The Chargers will share a stadium in Inglewood with the Rams beginning in 2019.

For the next two seasons, the Chargers will play in the 30,000-seat StubHub Center. It becomes the smallest stadium to host a full NFL season since the Packers played their home games at 25,000-seat City Stadium in 1956.

Can Los Angeles support two teams? In 1994, the last time the city had two teams, the Rams' average attendance was 42,346, while the Raiders averaged 51,196. The Rams went 4–12 that season, and the Raiders 9–7 with no playoff berth.

The current Rams are coming off a 4–12 season in 2016, prompting a coaching change, and the Chargers went 5–11 and also are starting over with a new head coach.

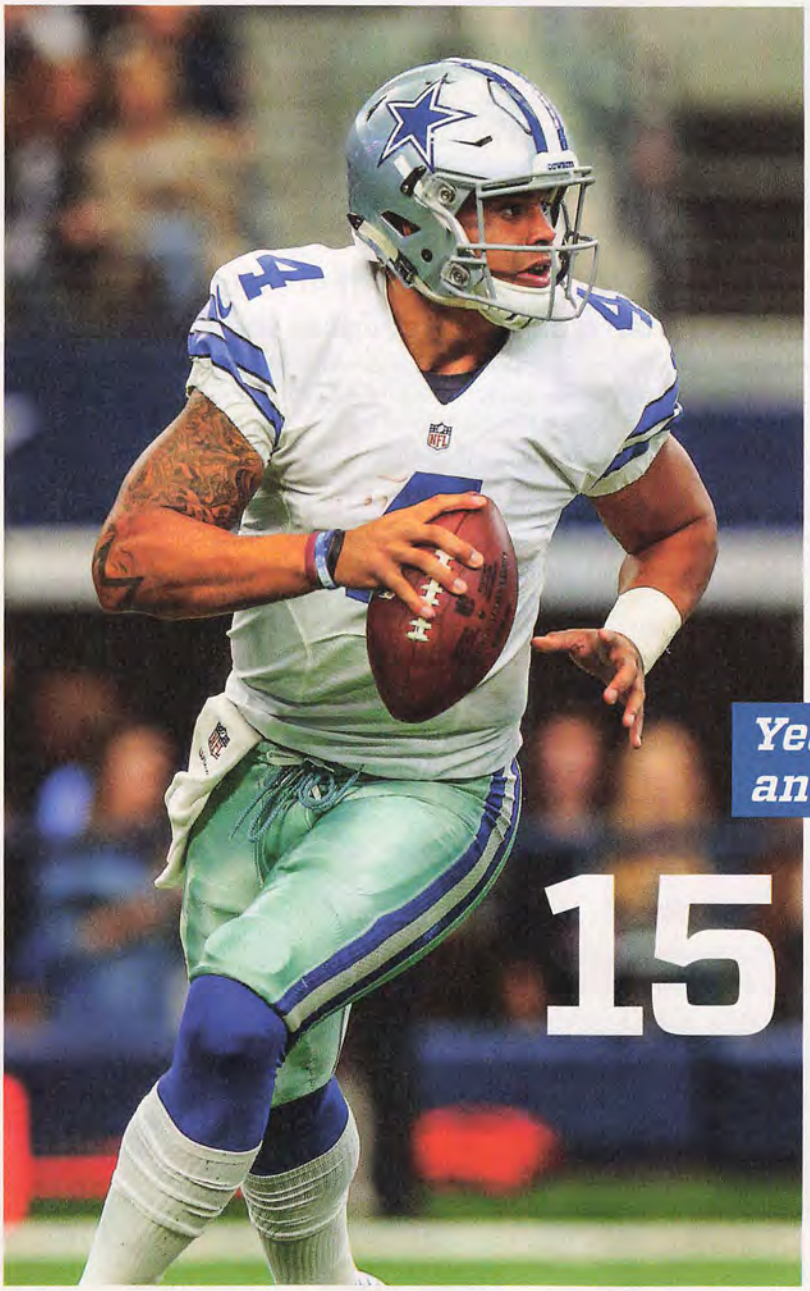
Luck, Carr: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Sarkisian: Brian Blanco/Getty Images; Prescott Layne Murdoch

13 Falcons' rebound

The Falcons spent the offseason picking up the pieces from their historic collapse in Super Bowl LI. They led 21–0 in the first half, 21–3 at halftime and 28–3 with 8:31 remaining in the third quarter. ESPN statistics gave Atlanta a 99.7 percent chance to win at that point. Critics have questioned the Falcons' play calling — eight passing plays and four runs after taking the 25-point lead until the Patriots tied the game.

Offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan left to take over the 49ers, and the Falcons replaced him with Alabama assistant **Steve Sarkisian**. Head coach Dan Quinn says the Falcons offense won't change, and why should it? It was the most prolific in the NFL last season.

Reigning MVP Matt Ryan, though, will have to establish a rapport with yet another offensive coordinator. Sarkisian becomes the fourth Ryan has had since 2011, following Mike Mularkey, Dirk Koetter and Shanahan.



14 AD's new home

After 10 seasons in Minnesota, Adrian Peterson has a new home and a new role. The Saints' throw-first, shotgun offense doesn't seem like an ideal fit for Peterson, but he didn't find many options on the free-agent market.

Peterson will not be the feature back for the first time in his career. He and third-round pick Alvin Kamara will spell Mark Ingram, who had his best season a year ago with 1,043 rushing yards, 319 receiving yards and 10 touchdowns. Tim Hightower got 155 touches in a complementary role to Ingram last season but left for the 49ers in free agency.

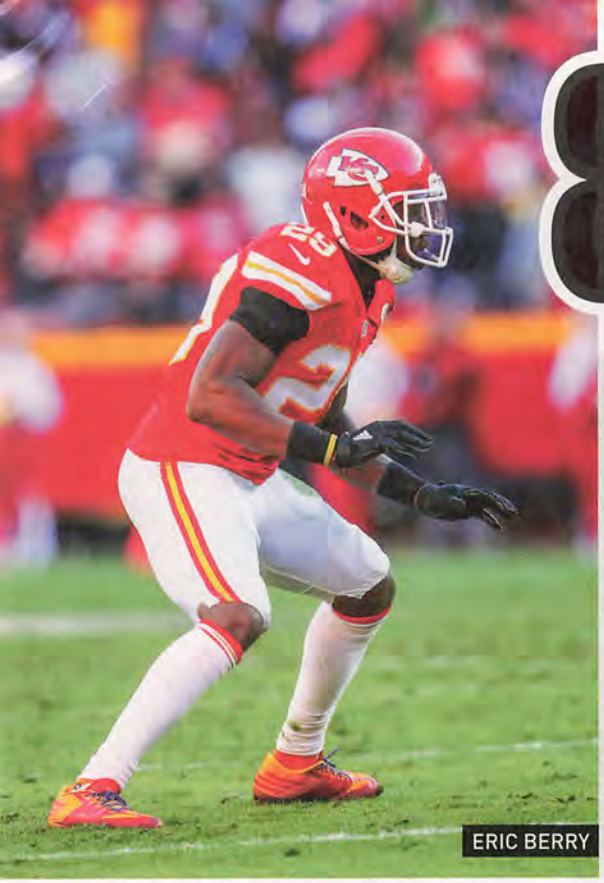
Peterson will have a chip on his shoulder, but can he stay on the field? Peterson, 32, played only three games in 2016 before undergoing surgery for a torn meniscus in his right knee. Because of injuries and a suspension, Peterson has played only 34 games the past four seasons, including all 16 in 2015 when he led the NFL in rushing.

15 Year 2 for Ezekiel Elliott and Dak Prescott

Ezekiel Elliott, the fourth overall pick in 2016, led the league in rushing with 1,631 yards as a rookie. He got MVP votes, but he didn't win offensive rookie of the year honors. Instead, teammate **Dak Prescott** won it.

Prescott, a fourth-round pick, produced arguably the best rookie season by a quarterback in NFL history. He went 13–3 with a 67.8 completion percentage, 3,667 yards, 23 touchdowns, only four interceptions and a passer rating of 104.9 while making Tony Romo expendable.

Can Elliott and Prescott build on what they did in 2016? Or will they experience the sophomore jinx? The Cowboys failed to win a playoff game last season but seemingly have a bright future with Elliott and Prescott as cornerstones.


ERIC BERRY

8 NUMBERS THAT SHAPED THE 2016 SEASON

BY RIVERS McCOWN

1) Kansas City and Oakland led the NFL with a +16 turnover margin

NFL fans don't like to hear this, but there's an inordinate amount of luck involved in an NFL season. Some of it comes via a team's schedule, and some of it comes because there are only 16 games. Compare that to sports like baseball or basketball, where we are dealing with five or 10 times that sample size. Catching lightning in a bottle or getting fortunate matters a lot more when there's less season to bring things back to the average performance. In 2014 and '15, the top three teams in turnover margin saw an average dip of 8.1 turnovers the following season.

The Chiefs and Raiders both made the AFC playoffs, preventing the Broncos, the defending Super Bowl champs, from claiming a spot. But they both also had a plus-16 turnover margin as compared to Denver's plus-three. Some of that is because Denver quarterbacks Trevor Siemian and Paxton Lynch were a little overzealous or unready. But more of it is just a simple matter of bounces going one way or another.

2) The Patriots threw just two interceptions all regular season

NFL head coaches, if you hadn't noticed, are a pretty conservative group as a whole. There have been entire subgenres of columns devoted to blown in-game calls based on the pure mathematics, and most of them revolve around coaches playing it too safe.

The NFL as a whole has embraced a safer passing offense over the last five years. Screen passes and package plays are in vogue, and throwing short of the sticks on third down appears to be on the rise. The Patriots were an extreme outlier in 2016, but interception totals as a whole have hit historical lows. The 2016 season had the fewest pick-sixes of any year in NFL history. Last season, there was one pick-six per 538 pass attempts. Sure, Matt Schaub didn't play, but that number tells us a lot about how offense is evolving. We are going to see more and more teams play it conservatively and try to stay on schedule via their passing game.

3) No Carolina Panthers wide receiver had a catch rate higher than 57 percent

After a spectacular 2015 season in which everything went right, 2016 was a win for sports media personalities still reading from the Hater's Guide to Cam Newton. Newton suffered a concussion and threw 14 interceptions to just 19 touchdowns as Carolina missed the playoffs.

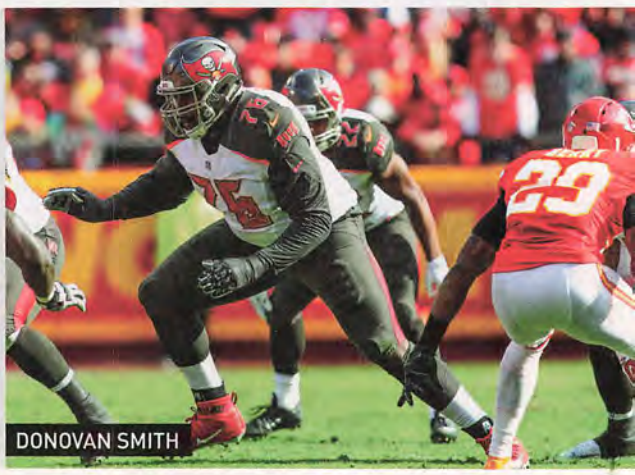
But, remember what we just said about passing offenses playing safer? The Panthers are an outlier. None of their top four receivers actually plays like a possession threat, which made it difficult for the offense to develop any consistency.

Newton threw more passes 20 or more yards downfield than he did screens. The Carolina passing game has been let down by its wide receivers for the last two years — it was just less noticeable in 2015 while Newton was behind an offensive line that was playing better. It's very easy to get down on Newton for how he played in 2016, but putting the blame for the entire Carolina implosion solely on him is a bit of a stretch. With a little help from his friends in 2017, Newton and the Panthers could be back in the playoff chase.

4) Three different Tampa Bay offensive linemen blew 20 or more blocks in 2016

Tampa Bay almost crashed the playoff party in the NFC. On the whole, Tampa's improvement isn't hard to understand: Mike Evans had another outstanding season, the team's pass rush was more effective than in previous years, and the Bucs covered just about everything but opposing running backs well.

But the scary thing for the NFC is that this team had major flaws that can be fixed. The offensive line had an astounding three players (Ali Marpet, Donovan Smith, and Kevin Pamphile) with 20 or more blown blocks, per Sports Info Solutions charting. That means that, mistake-wise, Tampa had three of the worst 19 starting linemen in the league. They also added DeSean Jackson to buffer a bad receiving corps and will have a camp competition at kicker after Roberto Aguayo conclusively proved in 2016 that spending second-round picks on kickers is stupid. The Bucs didn't quite launch in 2016, but 2017 could see things turn.


DONOVAN SMITH

5) Tennessee went from 28th in rushing attempts in 2015 to fourth in 2016

The Titans, led by Mike Mularkey's "exotic smashmouth" offense, busted out in 2016. They were a loss at Jacksonville away from taking the AFC South, and that loss could be blamed on quarterback Marcus Mariota's injury.

Tennessee was one of the most successful teams at zigging while everyone else was zagging in 2016. Behind a bounce-back year from DeMarco Murray and a great first season from rookie right tackle Jack Conklin, the Titans were one of only a few teams that were able to establish a running offense good enough to be the lead focus of an offense. The Titans were one of three teams that averaged more than 4.6 yards per carry and ran the ball more than 450 times, along with the Bills and the Cowboys.

It would not be surprising if Tennessee's success emboldened the rest of the league to try to create a rushing offense that makes games shorter — especially teams with better defenses that have no realistic path to acquire a franchise quarterback.

DEMARCO MURRAY

6) Atlanta's offense used play-action on 26 percent of its passing attempts

Matt Ryan was always a good quarterback with a few flaws, but under Kyle Shanahan's lead in 2016, he had the most outstanding statistics of any quarterback. A big reason why? The success Atlanta had in the play-action pass game.

Play-action fakes can really help out quarterbacks. They limit the reads to one side of the field, giving quarterbacks less to worry about. Play-action passes without bootlegs, in theory, give quarterbacks more time in the pocket. And, finally, if your play-action passes function off a real run game, you can deke linebackers and box safeties into neglecting responsibilities.

It's fair to question if Ryan can sustain this level of production without Shanahan. Natural regression would tell you that Ryan wouldn't do as well as he did last year. But it's also fair to wonder if the play-action pass may find itself back in vogue as the NFL continues to try to cut down on overloading the quarterback position. The best way to find premium quarterback numbers without a premium quarterback might be to tilt the odds in your favor, as San Francisco is banking on with Shanahan.

7) Jared Goff took 26 sacks in 231 dropbacks

There was a lot taking attention away from Goff in his first year in Los Angeles. Todd Gurley's high-profile implosion as a fantasy football option got most of the attention for the offense's failures. Jeff Fisher's firing got most of the team-wide attention as he encapsulated old-school thinking.

But Goff was a first-year bust on many levels. Getting sacked 26 times in 231 drop-backs is disastrous, even behind a bad Rams line. He looked as bad as any first-year, highly drafted quarterback in recent memory. He completed 54.6 percent of his passes in a league in which even Brock Osweiler connected on 59.0 percent. He threw seven picks to five touchdowns. He was even bad in the preseason.

There are a few instances of good quarterbacks having bad first seasons in recent years. Donovan McNabb was pretty bad in his first year, for example. But what you should take away from Goff's first season is that he has the potential to be a Ryan Leaf- or Blaine Gabbert-esque bust for the Rams. How you feel about his potential going forward is probably a big factor in how you feel the NFC West will shake out over the next few years. The Rams aren't winning anything unless they fix him up.

8) Dak Prescott finished third in the NFL in Adjusted Net Yards per Passing Attempt, at 7.86

ANY/A is a stat that takes yards per attempt and controls for both sacks and interceptions. Prescott was a fourth-round rookie. Finishing third in this statistic was a preposterous result in the context of NFL history. But, much like Russell Wilson did a few years ago, Prescott's success is trying to tell us something.

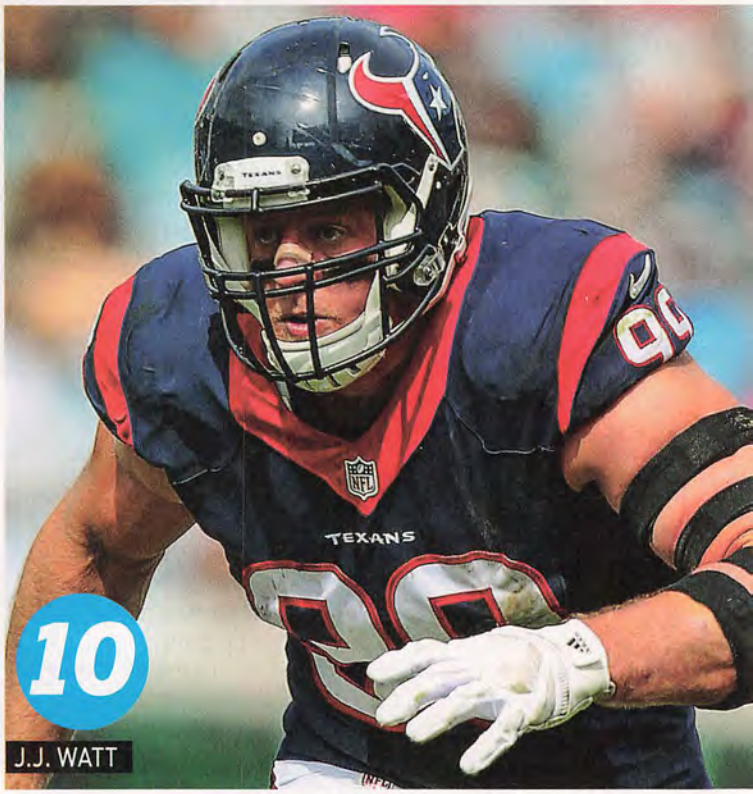
The traditional way of scouting quarterbacks is leaving outliers on the table. Putting a premium on arm talent is fine, but how many bombs dropped over the middle of a defense do you see in today's NFL? There's a much bigger focus on intermediate routes and ball placement against man-coverage. It's much harder than it ever has been before to hide a quarterback's weaknesses under pressure.

Setting up the Cowboys with a cost-controlled Prescott gives them money to pay their offensive line and focus their draft picks on defense. It will set them up with a window as a contender for the foreseeable future.

DAK PRESCOTT

Berry, Smith: Tim Umphrey; Murray: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Prescott: Layne Murdoch

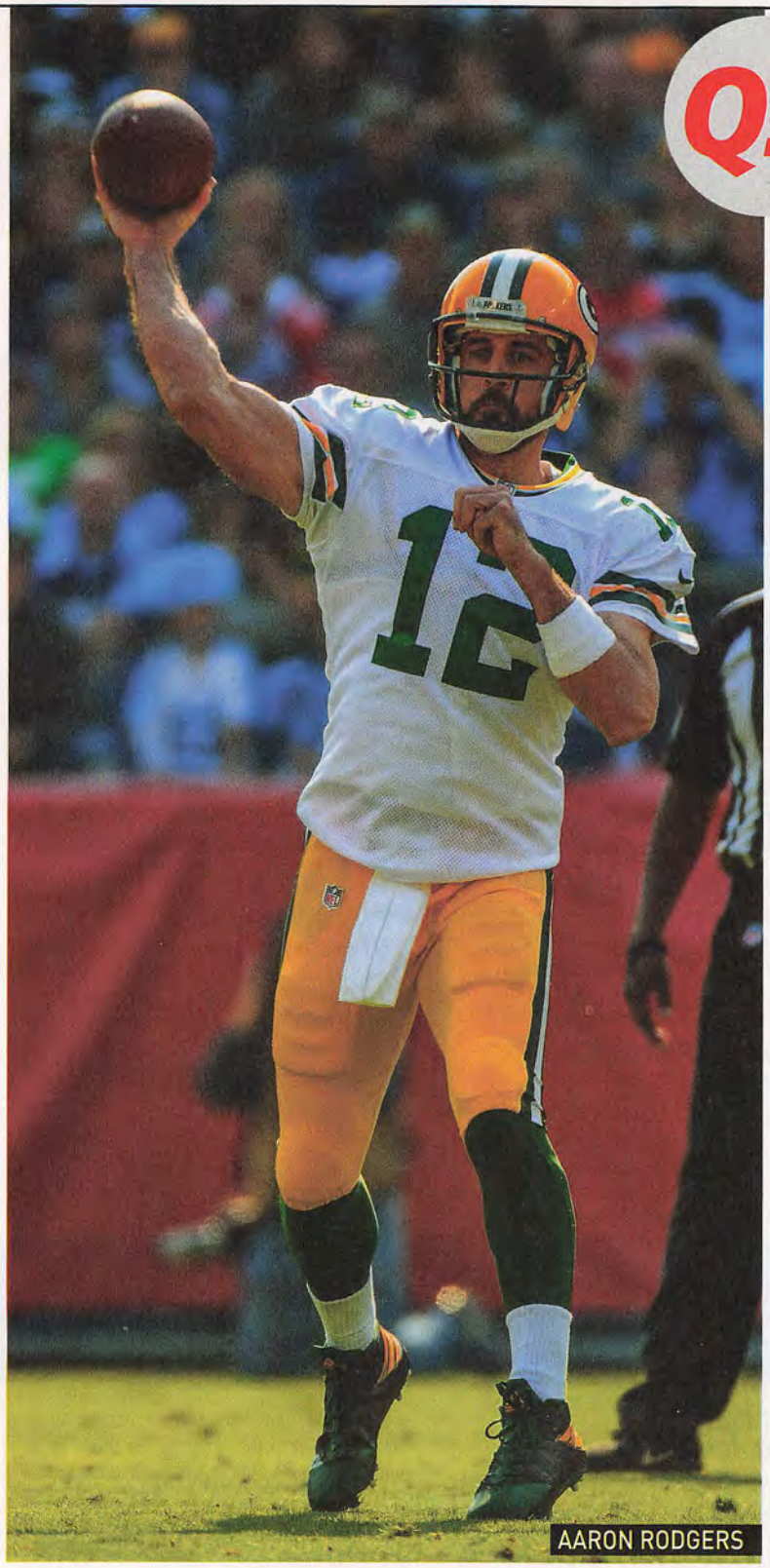
NFL PLAYER RANKINGS



ATHLON SPORTS **TOP 50** PLAYERS

1. **Aaron Rodgers,** QB, Green Bay
2. **Tom Brady,** QB, New England
3. **Julio Jones,** WR, Atlanta
4. **Khalil Mack,** DE, Oakland
5. **Von Miller,** OLB, Denver
6. **Le'Veon Bell,** RB, Pittsburgh
7. **Eric Berry,** S, Kansas City
8. **Luke Kuechly,** LB, Carolina
9. **Aaron Donald,** DT, L.A. Rams
10. **J.J. Watt,** DE, Houston
11. **Tyron Smith,** T, Dallas
12. **Ezekiel Elliott,** RB, Dallas
13. **A.J. Green,** WR, Cincinnati
14. **Matt Ryan,** QB, Atlanta
15. **Antonio Brown,** WR, Pittsburgh
16. **Ben Roethlisberger,** QB, Pittsburgh
17. **Rob Gronkowski,** TE, New England
18. **Odell Beckham Jr.,** WR, N.Y. Giants
19. **Sean Lee,** LB, Dallas
20. **Russell Wilson,** QB, Seattle
21. **Patrick Peterson,** CB, Arizona
22. **Drew Brees,** QB, New Orleans
23. **Richard Sherman,** CB, Seattle
24. **Geno Atkins,** DT, Cincinnati
25. **Marcus Peters,** CB, Kansas City
26. **Zach Martin,** G, Dallas
27. **David Johnson,** RB, Arizona
28. **Derek Carr,** QB, Oakland
29. **Landon Collins,** S, N.Y. Giants
30. **Andrew Luck,** QB, Indianapolis
31. **Joe Thomas,** T, Cleveland
32. **Earl Thomas,** S, Seattle
33. **Justin Houston,** OLB, Kansas City
34. **Ndamukong Suh,** DT, Miami
35. **Travis Frederick,** C, Dallas
36. **Jadeveon Clowney,** DE, Houston
37. **Josh Norman,** CB, Washington
38. **Matthew Stafford,** QB, Detroit
39. **LeSean McCoy,** RB, Buffalo
40. **Alex Mack,** C, Atlanta
41. **Jason Peters,** T, Philadelphia
42. **Cam Newton,** QB, Carolina
43. **Mike Evans,** WR, Tampa Bay
44. **Bobby Wagner,** LB, Seattle
45. **K.J. Wright,** LB, Seattle
46. **Michael Bennett,** DE, Seattle
47. **Joey Bosa,** DE, L.A. Chargers
48. **Jason Pierre-Paul,** DE, N.Y. Giants
49. **Travis Kelce,** TE, Kansas City
50. **Kirk Cousins,** QB, Washington

Brady, Rodgers: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Watt: W. E. Smith II


AARON RODGERS

QB

1. AARON RODGERS, GREEN BAY

The passer with the top quarterback rating in NFL history (104.1) remained dominant. Led NFL with 40 touchdown passes and guided Packers to eight straight wins before NFC title game loss.

2. TOM BRADY, NEW ENGLAND

A season that opened with a four-game Deflategate suspension couldn't have ended any sweeter — with Super Bowl LI MVP honors. Shows no signs of slowing down as he reaches age 40.

3. MATT RYAN, ATLANTA

An MVP season was ruined by Atlanta's collapse in Super Bowl LI. However, the loss shouldn't diminish a brilliant 2016 campaign highlighted by a career-high 38 touchdown passes and 117.1 quarterback rating.

4. BEN ROETHLISBERGER, PITTSBURGH

Overcame an early season knee injury to lead Pittsburgh to eight straight wins and AFC title game berth. Now ranks in top 10 all-time for touchdown passes (301) and passing yards (46,814).

5. RUSSELL WILSON, SEATTLE

Carried Seattle's offense while playing through a knee injury suffered in Week 3. Posted career highs in completions (353), attempts (546) and passing yards (4,219).

6. DREW BREES, NEW ORLEANS

Keeps rolling even at age 38. Amassed highest yardage and touchdown totals (5,208 and 37, respectively) since 2013.

7. DEREK CARR, OAKLAND

Value to the Raiders was further reinforced when Oakland collapsed following his season-ending leg injury in Week 15. Expected to sign a monster contract extension before start of 2017 campaign.

8. ANDREW LUCK, INDIANAPOLIS

The Colts have failed to make the playoffs in two straight seasons for the first time since 1997-98. But 8–8 records the past two years would be far worse if Luck weren't there.

9. MATT STAFFORD, DETROIT

Part of 2016 MVP conversation until finger injury triggered a late-season slump. No quarterback has ever passed for 30,000 yards in fewer games (109).

10. CAM NEWTON, CAROLINA

Performance of 2015 MVP took noticeable dip last season, partially because of a shoulder injury and Carolina's offensive line woes. Must improve career-low 52.9 completion percentage from 2016.

11. Kirk Cousins, Washington
12. Eli Manning, N.Y. Giants
13. Dak Prescott, Dallas
14. Philip Rivers, L.A. Chargers
15. Joe Flacco, Baltimore
16. Andy Dalton, Cincinnati
17. Marcus Mariota, Tennessee
18. Carson Palmer, Arizona
19. Jameis Winston, Tampa Bay
20. Alex Smith, Kansas City
21. Ryan Tannehill, Miami
22. Sam Bradford, Minnesota
23. Carson Wentz, Philadelphia
24. Tyrod Taylor, Buffalo
25. Blake Bortles, Jacksonville
26. Trevor Siemian, Denver
27. Jay Cutler, UFA
28. Jared Goff, L.A. Rams
29. Jimmy Garoppolo, New England
30. Colin Kaepernick, UFA

RB

LE'VEON BELL

1. LE'VEON BELL, PITTSBURGH
No running back is more patient in allowing holes to open before exploding through them. Fastest player to ever reach 3,000 rushing and 1,500 receiving yards — at 38 career games.

2. EZEKIEL ELLIOTT, DALLAS
Became fifth rookie since AFL-NFL merger in 1970 to win league's rushing title with 1,631 yards. Receiving threat as well with 1,994 scrimmage yards, marking the third-highest total ever by a rookie.

3. DAVID JOHNSON, ARIZONA
First player in NFL history to post 100-plus yards from scrimmage in first 15 games of a season. Set franchise record in that category (2,118) and scored NFL-high 20 touchdowns.

4. LESEAN MCCOY, BUFFALO
Rebounded from injury-plagued 2015 campaign to post highest per-carry average (5.4 yards) of eight-year NFL career. Seven 100-yard games highest total for a Bills RB since Willis McGahee in 2004.

5. DEMARCO MURRAY, TENNESSEE
The motor to Mike Mularkey's "exotic smash mouth" offense with his downhill running style. Put lousy 2015 campaign with Philadelphia in rear-view mirror by plowing for 1,287 yards and nine TDs.

6. JORDAN HOWARD, CHICAGO
Broke Matt Forté's franchise rookie rushing record with 1,313 yards. A 5.2-yard average ranked fourth all-time among NFL's rookie RBs with at least 250 carries.

7. JAY AJAYI, MIAMI
Consecutive 200-yard rushing games against Pittsburgh and Buffalo got Miami on winning track after 1-4 start. Enjoyed greatest increase in rushing yards from scrimmage (1,085) of any NFL running back from 2015.

8. LAMAR MILLER, HOUSTON
Proved he could handle a heavier rushing load after being underutilized for four seasons in Miami. Fifth among all NFL running backs in rushing yards (3,044) and scrimmage yards (3,904) over the past three seasons.

9. CARLOS HYDE, SAN FRANCISCO
Enjoyed the sixth-best rushing performance in 49ers history last season with 193 versus the Jets. Should prosper in zone-rushing attack being installed by new head coach Kyle Shanahan.

10. DEVONTA FREEMAN, ATLANTA
Dual threat as rusher and receiver. Ranked among top eight NFL RBs last season in total touchdowns (13), runs of 10-plus yards (30) and rushing first downs (61).

11. Melvin Gordon, L.A. Chargers
12. Todd Gurley, L.A. Rams
13. Adrian Peterson, New Orleans
14. LeGarrette Blount, UFA
15. C.J. Anderson, Denver
16. Frank Gore, Indianapolis
17. Mark Ingram, New Orleans
18. Latavius Murray, Minnesota
19. Jeremy Hill, Cincinnati
20. Isaiah Crowell, Cleveland
21. Jonathan Stewart, Carolina
22. Matt Forté, N.Y. Jets
23. Tevin Coleman, Atlanta
24. Darren Sproles, Philadelphia
25. Ty Montgomery, Green Bay
26. Bilal Powell, N.Y. Jets
27. Dion Lewis, New England
28. Spencer Ware, Kansas City
29. Eddie Lacy, Seattle
30. Jamaal Charles, Denver

FB

KYLE JUSZCZYK

1. KYLE JUSZCZYK, SAN FRANCISCO
Expected to play big role in new 49ers head coach Kyle Shanahan's offense after signing four-year, $21 million contract this offseason. Caught 78 passes the past two seasons.

2. PATRICK DIMARCO, BUFFALO
Helped pave the way for Atlanta's fifth-ranked rushing attack in 2016. Dirty work didn't go unnoticed with Buffalo tendering a four-year, $8.4 million free-agent contract this offseason.

3. JAMES DEVELIN, NEW ENGLAND
Once played in the Arena and United Football Leagues while making conversion from defensive end at Brown University. Former member of the Oklahoma City Yard Dawgz has two Super Bowl rings since joining the Patriots in 2012.

4. JOHN KUHN, NEW ORLEANS
Long-time fan-favorite in Green Bay found a new home with New Orleans in 2016 after being supplanted by Aaron Ripkowski. Scored five touchdowns on 34 touches in 2016.

5. MIKE TOLBERT, BUFFALO
One of NFL's best blockers the past nine seasons with Carolina (2012-2016) and San Diego (2008-2011). Could assume more of a traditional running back role after signing with Bills this offseason.

Bell: W.E. Smith II; Jones: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Juszczyk: Michael Reaves/Getty Images

WR

JULIO JONES

1. JULIO JONES, ATLANTA
All-time NFL leader in average career receiving yards per game (96.3) topped the league in that category once again in 2016. Became sixth player in league history with 300-plus receiving yards in a single game last season versus Carolina.

2. A.J. GREEN, CINCINNATI
Because of a midseason hamstring injury, fell just 36 yards short of joining Randy Moss as only wide receivers to open NFL careers with six consecutive 1,000-yard showings. The 2016 season highlighted by Hail Mary catch for the ages versus Cleveland.

3. ANTONIO BROWN, PITTSBURGH
This textbook route-runner scored a lucrative contract extension after topping 100 catches for the fourth straight season. No wideout has ever caught more passes in a four-year span (481 for 6,315 yards since 2013).

4. ODELL BECKHAM JR., N.Y. GIANTS
No NFL receiver possesses more ability to turn a quick slant into a touchdown. Could rank among all-time greats if able to play in more disciplined fashion.

5. MIKE EVANS, TAMPA BAY
Notched career-highs in catches (96) and receiving yards (1,321) and tied career high in TDs (12) in his third NFL season despite consistent double-teaming. Such defensive attention should be alleviated to an extent by Tampa Bay's signing of free agent DeSean Jackson.

6. JULIAN EDELMAN, NEW ENGLAND
Followed in the footsteps of two other superlative Patriots wideouts also under 5'10" (Wes Welker and Deion Branch). Clutch performer in two Super Bowl victories the past three seasons.

7. JORDY NELSON, GREEN BAY
The 2016 NFL Comeback Player of the Year caught 97 passes for 1,257 yards and a league-high 14 touchdowns. Eleven of those scores came in the red zone, which also led the league in that category.

8. LARRY FITZGERALD, ARIZONA
Surefire future Hall of Famer has reinvented himself as a slot receiver with 216 catches over the past two seasons. Outstanding blocker as well.

9. DEZ BRYANT, DALLAS
Receiving numbers took a big dip with Dak Prescott becoming Cowboys starting quarterback. Building a stronger WR/QB bond is key to rebounding in 2017.

10. DOUG BALDWIN, SEATTLE
Baldwin remains the NFL's best undrafted wide receiver. Flourished in 2016 with career highs in catches (94) and receiving yards (1,128).

11. DeAndre Hopkins, Houston
12. Jarvis Landry, Miami
13. T.Y. Hilton, Indianapolis
14. DeSean Jackson, Tampa Bay
15. Emmanuel Sanders, Denver
16. Demaryius Thomas, Denver
17. Brandin Cooks, New England
18. Amari Cooper, Oakland
19. Michael Crabtree, Oakland
20. Michael Thomas, New Orleans
21. Keenan Allen, L.A. Chargers
22. Pierre Garçon, San Francisco
23. Allen Robinson, Jacksonville
24. Sammy Watkins, Buffalo
25. Golden Tate, Detroit
26. Alshon Jeffery, Philadelphia
27. Kenny Stills, Miami
28. Brandon Marshall, N.Y. Giants
29. Kenny Britt, Cleveland
30. Adam Thielen, Minnesota

TE

1. ROB GRONKOWSKI, NEW ENGLAND
Hasn't completed a 16-game season since 2011 because of injuries. But when healthy, there is no better tight end.

2. TRAVIS KELCE, KANSAS CITY
For the first time since Tony Gonzalez's departure, the Chiefs have an elite tight end. Led all TEs in receiving yards with 1,125 on 85 catches in 2016.

3. GREG OLSEN, CAROLINA
Became the first tight end in NFL history to post three consecutive 1,000-yard receiving seasons. Olsen ranks in top 10 all-time in catches (622) and receiving yards (7,365) among TEs.

4. JASON WITTEN, DALLAS
No. 2 all-time among tight ends in catches and receiving yards with 1,089 for 11,888. Enters this season ready to extend records for most consecutive games played (219) and started (163) in Cowboys history.

5. JIMMY GRAHAM, SEATTLE
Overcame career-threatening knee injury to regain Pro Bowl form. Became first tight end in Seahawks history to record 100-plus receiving yards in back-to-back games as part of 65-catch, 923-yard season.

6. DELANIE WALKER, TENNESSEE
Prime example of a late bloomer whose skills were underutilized by his former team. Compiled 282 catches since signing with Titans in 2013 compared to 123 in seven seasons with San Francisco.

7. JORDAN REED, WASHINGTON
Praised as the Redskins player "the offense runs through" by head coach Jay Gruden. Per-game average of 5.5 catches ranked second among all NFL tight ends in 2016.

8. MARTELLUS BENNETT, GREEN BAY
Helped pick up the slack for New England when Rob Gronkowski was lost to a back injury. Could improve on his 55-catch campaign from 2016 now that he's paired with Aaron Rodgers.

9. ZACH ERTZ, PHILADELPHIA
Fell just three catches short in 2016 of tying Keith Jackson's single-season franchise record for tight ends (81). Sixty-three of those receptions came in final nine games as rookie QB Carson Wentz became more comfortable running Philadelphia's offense.

10. TYLER EIFERT, CINCINNATI
Multiple injuries ruined the 2016 season of Cincinnati's top red-zone target (13 TDs in 2015). Durability concerns linger into 2017 following offseason back surgery.

11. Kyle Rudolph, Minnesota
12. Jermaine Gresham, Arizona
13. Dennis Pitta, Baltimore
14. Eric Ebron, Detroit
15. Jared Cook, Oakland
16. Hunter Henry, L.A. Chargers
17. Dwayne Allen, New England
18. Jack Doyle, Indianapolis
19. Cameron Brate, Tampa Bay
20. Coby Fleener, New Orleans

T

1. TYRON SMITH, DALLAS
The best player on the NFL's top offensive line. Allowed only two sacks in 13 games last season despite having to block for a rookie quarterback in Dak Prescott.

2. JOE THOMAS, CLEVELAND
Widely considered the top offensive lineman of his generation. Still hasn't missed a single snap since being a 2007 first-round draft pick.

3. JASON PETERS, PHILADELPHIA
Remains a shut-down left tackle even at age of 35. Seven of nine Pro Bowl appearances have come in Philadelphia, the second-highest total in Eagles history behind Chuck Bednarik (eight).

4. TRENT WILLIAMS, WASHINGTON
Voted to fifth consecutive Pro Bowl despite four-game suspension. Teamed with guard Brandon Scherff to become first Redskins offensive line tandem selected for Pro Bowl since 1991.

5. TERRON ARMSTEAD, NEW ORLEANS
Missed nine games because of knee injuries but played well when healthy. One of the game's best young left tackles at age 26.

6. ANDREW WHITWORTH, L.A. RAMS
A staple on Cincinnati's line the past 11 seasons, he left for Los Angeles after signing a three-year, $33.8 million contract. Departed among all-time leaders in games played for Bengals at 168 with 164 career starts.

7. DAVID BAKHTIARI, GREEN BAY
A big reason why Green Bay was considered to have NFL's best pass-blocking offensive line in 2016. Rewarded with four-year, $48 million contract extension before start of 2016 season.

8. LANE JOHNSON, PHILADELPHIA
Eagles' 2016 season unraveled after Johnson was forced to serve a 10-game PED suspension. Athletic enough to have played quarterback and tight end in college before transitioning to tackle at Oklahoma.

9. JACK CONKLIN, TENNESSEE
Joined Dallas guard Zack Martin as only the second rookie offensive lineman to earn All-Pro honors since AFL-NFL merger in 1970. Immediately cemented himself at right tackle after becoming eighth overall pick in 2016 draft.

10. MITCHELL SCHWARTZ, KANSAS CITY
Improvement of Chiefs guard Laurent Duvernay-Tardif was no accident following this right tackle's 2016 offseason signing from Cleveland.

11. Donald Penn, Oakland
12. Taylor Lewan, Tennessee
13. Bryan Bulaga, Green Bay
14. Duane Brown, Houston
15. Joe Staley, San Francisco
16. Russell Okung, L.A. Chargers
17. Nate Solder, New England
18. Cordy Glenn, Buffalo
19. Jake Matthews, Atlanta
20. Taylor Decker, Detroit

G

1. ZACK MARTIN, DALLAS
First Cowboys rookie (non kicker) in 45 years to make All-Pro team (in 2014) continues to play at elite level. Hasn't missed a start since grade school.

2. KELECHI OSEMELE, OAKLAND
Provided immediate upgrade to Raiders' offensive line upon signing massive free-agent contract in 2016. Oakland averaged 120.1 rushing yards last season, an improvement of 29 yards per game from 2015.

3. MARSHAL YANDA, BALTIMORE
Selected by fans as one of 10 greatest players in Ravens history. Streak of six straight Pro Bowl berths ranks second among active offensive linemen behind Cleveland's Joe Thomas (10).

4. DAVID DECASTRO, PITTSBURGH
Paved the way for Le'Veon Bell to lead all AFC running backs with a 105.7-yard rushing average per game. Signed to five-year, $50 million extension before 2016 season opener.

5. T.J. LANG, DETROIT
Green Bay lost stalwart on its offensive line to NFC North rival Lions after failing to match three-year, $28.5 million contract. Detroit must hope foot and hip injuries aren't sign of career decline.

6. JOSH SITTON, CHICAGO
Made smooth transition to Bears offense after being late preseason cut in Green Bay. Still athletic enough to block in space downfield.

7. KEVIN ZEITLER, CLEVELAND
Widely considered league's best offensive linemen in 2017 free-agent class. Body of work from five years in Cincinnati led to biggest contract tendered a guard (five years, $60 million) in NFL history.

8. RICHIE INCOGNITO, BUFFALO
Has reinvented himself with Bills after sitting out 2014 season following "Bullygate" scandal with Miami Dolphins. Buffalo has led NFL in rushing the past two seasons.

9. KYLE LONG, CHICAGO
Returned to guard after playing tackle in 2015. Limited to eight games because of ankle injury and also had offseason surgery for torn labrum.

10. TRAI TURNER, CAROLINA
Forced to play right tackle for four games in 2016 because of Panthers O-line injuries, but right guard is natural spot. Has started all 32 regular-season games in the last two seasons.

11. Gabe Jackson, Oakland
12. Mike Iupati, Arizona
13. Larry Warford, New Orleans
14. Justin Pugh, N.Y. Giants
15. Brandon Scherff, Washington
16. Ron Leary, Denver
17. Joel Bitonio, Cleveland
18. Ramon Foster, Pittsburgh
19. Joe Thuney, New England
20. Brandon Brooks, Philadelphia

C

1. TRAVIS FREDERICK, DALLAS
Became NFL's highest-paid center last August by signing a six-year, $56.4 million contract. Has not allowed a sack since 2014 season.

2. ALEX MACK, ATLANTA
Key to Atlanta's Super Bowl run after signing five-year, $45 million contract to leave Cleveland. Became the stabilizing O-line presence the Falcons had lacked since Todd McClure's departure following 2012 season.

3. RODNEY HUDSON, OAKLAND
Raiders general manager Reggie McKenzie hit a home run with this offseason signing from Kansas City in 2015. Was most decorated lineman in Florida State history while playing at guard.

4. RYAN KALIL, CAROLINA
Limited to eight games in 2016 by shoulder injury that required major offseason surgery. Now gets to play on same offensive line as brother Matt, who was signed away from Minnesota during the offseason to play left tackle.

5. ERIC WOOD, BUFFALO
Wood's 2016 season ended after nine games by broken fibula. Longest-tenured (nine seasons) offensive player on Bills roster.

6. MAURKICE POUNCEY, PITTSBURGH
Rebounded to start 15 games in 2016 after missing entire 2015 campaign with a broken fibula. Showed his toughness in Week 10 when he started five days after undergoing surgery on dislocated thumb.

7. JASON KELCE, PHILADELPHIA
One-time walk-on linebacker at University of Cincinnati has started ever since 2011 rookie season. Only Eagles player to participate in all of Philadelphia's 1,131 offensive snaps in 2016.

8. MAX UNGER, NEW ORLEANS
Helped keep Drew Brees' jersey clean by leading an O-line that allowed only 27 sacks on the QB's league-high 700 dropbacks. Durability issues a concern following offseason foot injury.

9. BRANDON LINDER, JACKSONVILLE
One of the few bright spots for Jacksonville's offensive line in 2016 after making successful transition from guard to center.

10. MATT PARADIS, DENVER
Another late-round Broncos steal at center a la Chris Myers and Tom Nalen. Led Broncos in performance-based pay bonuses the past two seasons by outplaying rookie contract.

11. Weston Richburg, N.Y. Giants
12. Mike Pouncey, Miami
13. Ryan Kelly, Indianapolis
14. Cody Whitehair, Chicago
15. Ben Jones, Tennessee
16. Jeremy Zuttah, San Francisco
17. Matt Slauson, L.A. Chargers
18. Nick Mangold, UFA
19. Daniel Kilgore, San Francisco
20. David Andrews, New England

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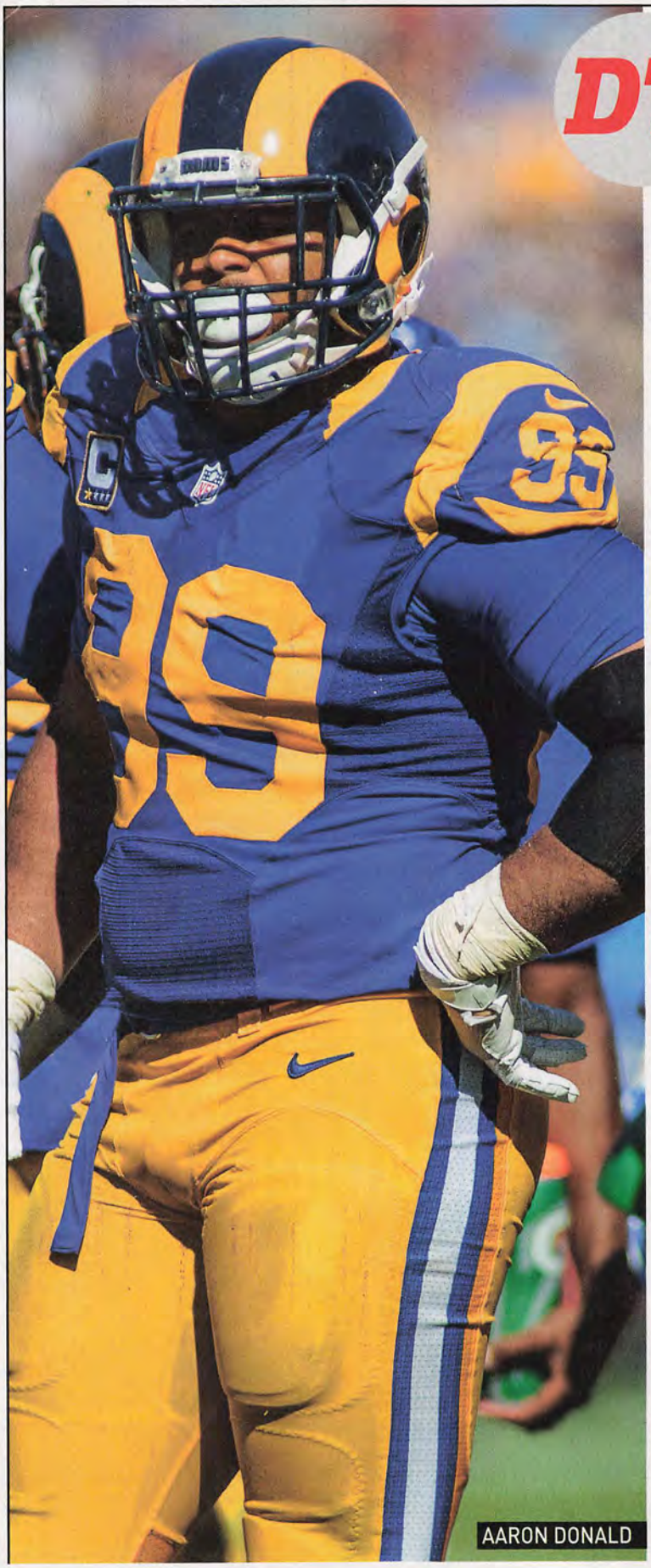


AARON DONALD

DT

4-3 DEFENSIVE TACKLES/ 3-4 NOSE TACKLES

1. AARON DONALD, L.A. RAMS

He remained the NFL's most disruptive interior lineman in 2016. Will transition to 3-4 end under new Rams defensive coordinator Wade Phillips, but no change expected to penetrating style of play.

2. GENO ATKINS, CINCINNATI

Led all of the NFL's defensive tackles with nine sacks despite constant double-teaming. Pat Sims (1.5) was the only other Bengals DT with a sack in 2016.

3. NDAMUKONG SUH, MIAMI

It took a season, but the Dolphins finally found a defensive scheme — the "Wide-Nine" — that played to the same strengths Suh displayed in Detroit. Notched a career-high 72 tackles along with five sacks.

4. BRANDON WILLIAMS, BALTIMORE

A major reason the Ravens have allowed fewer than 90 rushing yards per game in two of the past three seasons. Rewarded with a five-year, $54 million contract this offseason.

5. DAMON HARRISON, N.Y. GIANTS

"Snacks" provided an immediate upgrade to New York's run defense upon arriving from the Jets. The Giants yielded an average of just 88.6 yards per game last season, an improvement of 32.8 yards from 2015.

6. FLETCHER COX, PHILADELPHIA

Didn't make as smooth a transition to Philadelphia's new "Wide-Nine" scheme as Ndamukong Suh did in Miami. Still Eagles' best defensive lineman and is only 26 years old.

7. LINVAL JOSEPH, MINNESOTA

Set a career high with 77 tackles and tied a career high with four sacks. Could be even more dominant if focus shifts to improving pass rush rather than solely concentrating on stopping the run per Vikings head coach Mike Zimmer.

8. KAWANN SHORT, CAROLINA

Landed five-year, $80 million contract extension in April despite drop in sacks from 11 to six in 2016. "The mismatches he creates for us on defense force opponents to be aware of him at all times and give us an edge along the defensive line," Panthers head coach Ron Rivera says.

9. GERALD MCCOY, TAMPA BAY

Injury history keeps growing but remains an interior force. More impact plays in fourth quarter is personal goal for 2017 season.

10. DONTARI POE, ATLANTA

Was a 350-pound load to block in Kansas City's 3-4 scheme. Falcons want him to drop weight so he can play end and better his pass rush with a more penetrating approach.

11. Danny Shelton, Cleveland
12. Marcell Dareus, Buffalo
13. Bennie Logan, Kansas City
14. Malik Jackson, Jacksonville
15. Michael Brockers, L.A. Rams
16. Alan Branch, New England
17. Nick Fairley, New Orleans
18. Kenny Clark, Green Bay
19. Johnathan Hankins, Indianapolis
20. Grady Jarrett, Atlanta

Donald: Peter Brouillet; Watt: W.E. Smith II; Mack: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

J.J. WATT

DE 3-4

1. J.J. WATT, HOUSTON
Missed almost all of last season following back surgery. Should return to Defensive Player of the Year form — an award he has already won three times.

2. JADEVEON CLOWNEY, HOUSTON
Became as dominant as Watt in the latter's absence after being shifted from OLB to end. Finished with career highs in tackles (52), sacks (six) and quarterback hits (17) for NFL's top-ranked defense.

3. JOEY BOSA, L.A. CHARGERS
The NFL's Defensive Rookie of the Year — and with good reason. Registered 10.5 sacks and 41 tackles despite missing four games following a contract holdout and subsequent hamstring injury.

4. JURRELL CASEY, TENNESSEE
Reached Pro Bowl for second straight season after making adjustment to 3-4 end. Tallied 44 tackles, five sacks and 29 quarterback pressures.

5. CALAIS CAMPBELL, JACKSONVILLE
Stalwart of Arizona defense since 2007 is off to the Jaguars after inking four-year, $60 million deal. Projected to replace Jared Odrick as DE on run downs & interior rusher in nickel/dime packages.

6. DEREK WOLFE, DENVER
Among the NFL's most active 3-4 ends but received little help from Denver's other defensive linemen in 2016. Should benefit from Broncos signing fellow D-linemen Domata Peko and Zach Kerr in free agency.

7. LEONARD WILLIAMS, N.Y. JETS
Biggest positive on a disappointing defensive front in 2016. Played highest percentage of snaps (86.5) for an AFC 3-4 end and finished with a career-best 68 tackles and seven sacks.

8. MIKE DANIELS, GREEN BAY
Possesses quickness that belies his 6'0", 310-pound frame. Topped all Packers defensive linemen in sacks (four) while helping to anchor the NFL's eighth-ranked run defense.

9. CAM HEYWARD, PITTSBURGH
Upward career trajectory slowed when suffering what later became a season-ending hamstring injury in Week 5. His 25 career sacks tie him for fourth-highest total among Steelers defensive linemen since it became official statistic in 1982.

10. KYLE WILLIAMS, BUFFALO
No 3-4 DE/4-3 DT has more tackles (534) since 2006. Production also has never waned despite the Bills frequently changing defensive systems amid lengthy playoff drought.

11. Akiem Hicks, Chicago
12. DeForest Buckner, San Francisco
13. Stephon Tuitt, Pittsburgh
14. Timmy Jernigan, Philadelphia
15. Muhammad Wilkerson, N.Y. Jets
16. Chris Baker, Tampa Bay
17. Chris Jones, Kansas City
18. Arik Armstead, San Francisco
19. Sheldon Richardson, N.Y. Jets
20. Emmanuel Ogbah, Cleveland

KHALIL MACK

DE 4-3

1. KHALIL MACK, OAKLAND
Won NFL Defensive Player of the Year honors despite a lack of pass-rushing support from teammates. Accounted for 11 of Oakland's league-low 25 sacks.

2. MICHAEL BENNETT, SEATTLE
How a talent like this went undrafted in 2009 remains mind-boggling. Signed to a three-year contract extension last December despite being 31 years old and missing five games in 2016 because of injuries.

3. JASON PIERRE-PAUL, N.Y. GIANTS
Mounted one of the NFL's greatest comebacks after mangling hand in a July 2015 fireworks accident. A 53-tackle, seven-sack season netted a four-year, $62 million offseason contract extension.

4. EVERSON GRIFFEN, MINNESOTA
Averaged 10 sacks the past three seasons after registering 17.5 in first four NFL seasons. Matured into team leader as well.

5. CAMERON WAKE, MIAMI
Recovered from torn Achilles tendon to post 11.5 sacks along with first career interception in 2016. Shows no signs of slowing down at age 35.

6. CARLOS DUNLAP, CINCINNATI
Ability to affect opposing quarterbacks goes beyond eight sacks in 2016. Also used 6'6" frame to help defense a career-high 15 passes.

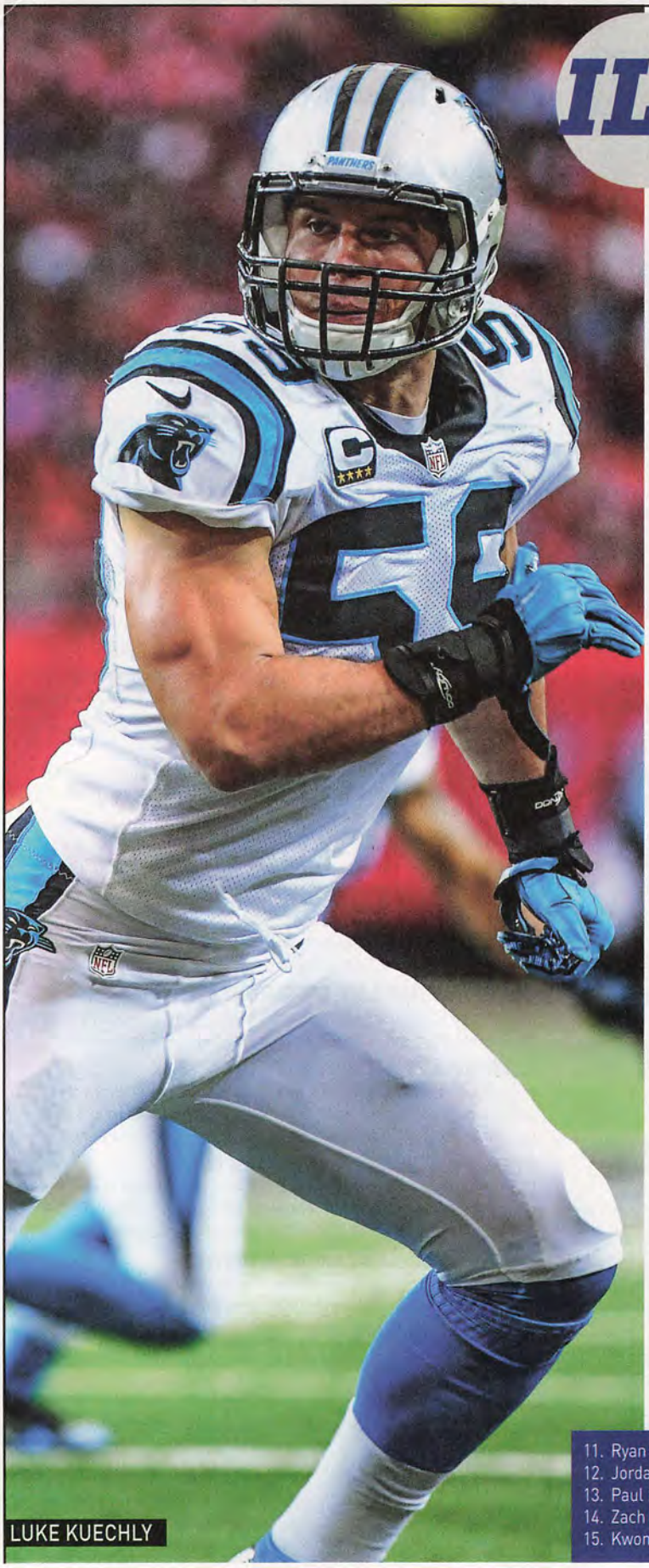
7. ZIGGY ANSAH, DETROIT
Injuries and double-teams from lack of consistent pass rush by Detroit's other ends were primary reasons for drop in sacks from 14.5 to just two in 13 starts. Still headed toward massive contract extension.

8. OLIVIER VERNON, N.Y. GIANTS
Giants management was determined to get its money's worth after tendering a five-year, $85 million contract in 2016 offseason. Became NFL's only defensive lineman to play 1,000-plus snaps last season (1,040).

9. DANIELLE HUNTER, MINNESOTA
No player who didn't start a game in 2016 had more sacks (12.5). Will compete with Brian Robison for first-string spot in 2017.

10. BRANDON GRAHAM, PHILADELPHIA
Sack total (5.5) doesn't reflect effectiveness in 2016. Led all players in combined sacks, hurries and quarterback knockdowns with 80, according to Stats LLC.

11. Cliff Avril, Seattle
12. Trey Flowers, New England
13. Frank Clark, Seattle
14. Cameron Jordan, New Orleans
15. Brian Robison, Minnesota
16. Robert Ayers, Tampa Bay
17. Kerry Hyder, Detroit
18. Andre Branch, Miami
19. Mario Addison, Carolina
20. Kony Ealy, New England



LUKE KUECHLY

ILB

1. LUKE KUECHLY, CAROLINA

Nobody better when healthy, but concussions becoming a major concern for career longevity. Missed final six games after suffering latest head trauma against New Orleans.

2. BOBBY WAGNER, SEATTLE

The first Seahawks player with five consecutive 100-tackle seasons (and counting) led NFL with career-high 167 stops in 2016. Also top tackler in franchise postseason history.

3. DONT'A HIGHTOWER, NEW ENGLAND

Multi-tool player remained in the fold for Patriots after brief free-agent tour. Fumble-causing sack of Matt Ryan in Super Bowl LI was key part of New England's improbable comeback against Atlanta.

4. NAVORRO BOWMAN, SAN FRANCISCO

Heart and soul of 49ers defense was lost for 2016 season in Week 4 to torn Achilles tendon. Working on second comeback from major injury in three-year span.

5. ALEC OGLETREE, L.A. RAMS

Excelled in 2015 after shifting from outside to middle linebacker in place of the released James Laurinaitis. Secured Week 2 win over Seattle by forcing and recovering fumble by Seahawks running back Christine Michael.

6. BENARDRICK MCKINNEY, HOUSTON

The leading tackler on the NFL's No. 1 defense with 129 stops in 2016. Adept at using long arms to keep blockers from getting into a 6'4" frame that isn't considered ideal for the position.

7. KIKO ALONSO, MIAMI

Enjoyed best season since breakout 2013 rookie campaign with Buffalo after being able to avoid knee problems. Shifting to weak-side linebacker in 2017 with Miami's signing of free agent Lawrence Timmons (Pittsburgh).

8. DEONE BUCANNON, ARIZONA

Credited with ushering in new wave of hybrid linebackers/safeties after becoming Arizona's 2014 first-round draft pick. Finished second on Cardinals in tackles last season with 91 despite missing final three games because of injury.

9. C.J. MOSLEY, BALTIMORE

Easily the Ravens' best linebacker since Ray Lewis' retirement following the 2012 season. Joins fellow stalwarts Thomas Davis, Luke Kuechly and Jamie Collins as one of just four LBs with 300-plus tackles, five INTs and five sacks since 2014.

10. DEION JONES, ATLANTA

Added the speed Atlanta was seeking at middle linebacker despite being undersized for the position at 6'1" and 222 pounds. Led all NFL rookies with 106 tackles and was third among rookies with 11 passes defensed.

11. Ryan Shazier, Pittsburgh
12. Jordan Hicks, Philadelphia
13. Paul Posluszny, Jacksonville
14. Zach Brown, Washington
15. Kwon Alexander, Tampa Bay
16. Lawrence Timmons, Miami
17. Eric Kendricks, Minnesota
18. Jerrell Freeman, Chicago
19. Brian Cushing, Houston
20. Craig Robertson, New Orleans

Kuechly, Miller: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Lee: Layne Murdoch

VON MILLER

OLB 3-4

1. VON MILLER, DENVER
Signing a massive contact extension in 2016 offseason didn't create complacency. Finished with double-digit sacks (13.5) for fifth time in past six seasons.

2. JUSTIN HOUSTON, KANSAS CITY
Played in just five games last season because of knee problems. Talent still on display with 21 tackles and four sacks in those contests.

3. WHITNEY MERCILUS, HOUSTON
Underrated because of attention given to teammates J.J. Watt and Jadeveon Clowney. Compiled 53 tackles and 7.5 sacks for NFL's top-ranked defense.

4. MELVIN INGRAM, L.A. CHARGERS
Blossomed into one of league's best pass rushers after disappointing returns in first three NFL seasons. Mustered 125 tackles, 18.5 sacks and 11 passes defensed the past two years.

5. VIC BEASLEY, ATLANTA
The 2016 Deacon Jones Award winner after leading NFL with 15.5 sacks. Should be even better in 2017 as repertoire of pass-rush moves grows.

6. JAMES HARRISON, PITTSBURGH
Still beastly even at age 39. Added another five sacks last season to a career total that may eventually lead to Pro Football Hall of Fame induction.

7. BRIAN ORAKPO, TENNESSEE
Flourishing in Dick LeBeau's zone-blitz scheme with 17.5 sacks over the past two seasons. An excellent complement to Titans OLB Derrick Morgan (nine sacks in 2016).

8. CHANDLER JONES, ARIZONA
Provided the pass rush Arizona sought when acquired from New England in 2016 for Jonathan Cooper and a second-round draft choice. An 11-sack season earned a five-year, $82.5 million contract extension.

9. RYAN KERRIGAN, WASHINGTON
"The Showstopper" is climbing Washington's all-time sack list with 58.5 in first six seasons. He has started all 96 games of NFL career, a figure that ranks behind only Miami's Lawrence Timmons among active linebackers.

10. CLAY MATTHEWS, GREEN BAY
Struggled with injuries again in five-sack campaign but remains Packers best pass rusher. Seven seasons of six-plus sacks since 2009 trail only Julius Peppers (eight) in that span.

11. Markus Golden, Arizona
12. Nick Perry, Green Bay
13. Lorenzo Alexander, Buffalo
14. Terrell Suggs, Baltimore
15. Erik Walden, UFA
16. Derrick Morgan, Tennessee
17. Dee Ford, Kansas City
18. Leonard Floyd, Chicago
19. Trent Murphy, Washington
20. Tamba Hali, Kansas City

SEAN LEE

OLB 4-3

1. SEAN LEE, DALLAS
Linchpin to the NFL's top run defense in 2016. Compiled a career-high 145 tackles and remained healthy, which has proven biggest career challenge.

2. K.J. WRIGHT, SEATTLE
One of NFL's most underrated players finally getting deserved praise. A career-high 126 tackles resulted in first Pro Bowl appearance.

3. THOMAS DAVIS, CAROLINA
Managed to avoid the Super Bowl hangover that affected the team overall. Voted to second straight Pro Bowl with almost exact same stats (106 tackles, four passes defensed, three INTs) as 2015.

4. VONTAZE BURFICT, CINCINNATI
Intensity and football savvy give Bengals a different defense when he's on the field. Unfortunately for Cincinnati, has missed 22 games the past three seasons because of injuries and suspension.

5. ANTHONY BARR, MINNESOTA
Reached second straight Pro Bowl as an alternate, but more is expected in 2017. Had "tendency to coast" last season according to Vikings head coach Mike Zimmer.

6. LAVONTE DAVID, TAMPA BAY
Began taking to new role in Mike Smith's defense as 2016 season unfolded. Four of five sacks came in Tampa Bay's final three games.

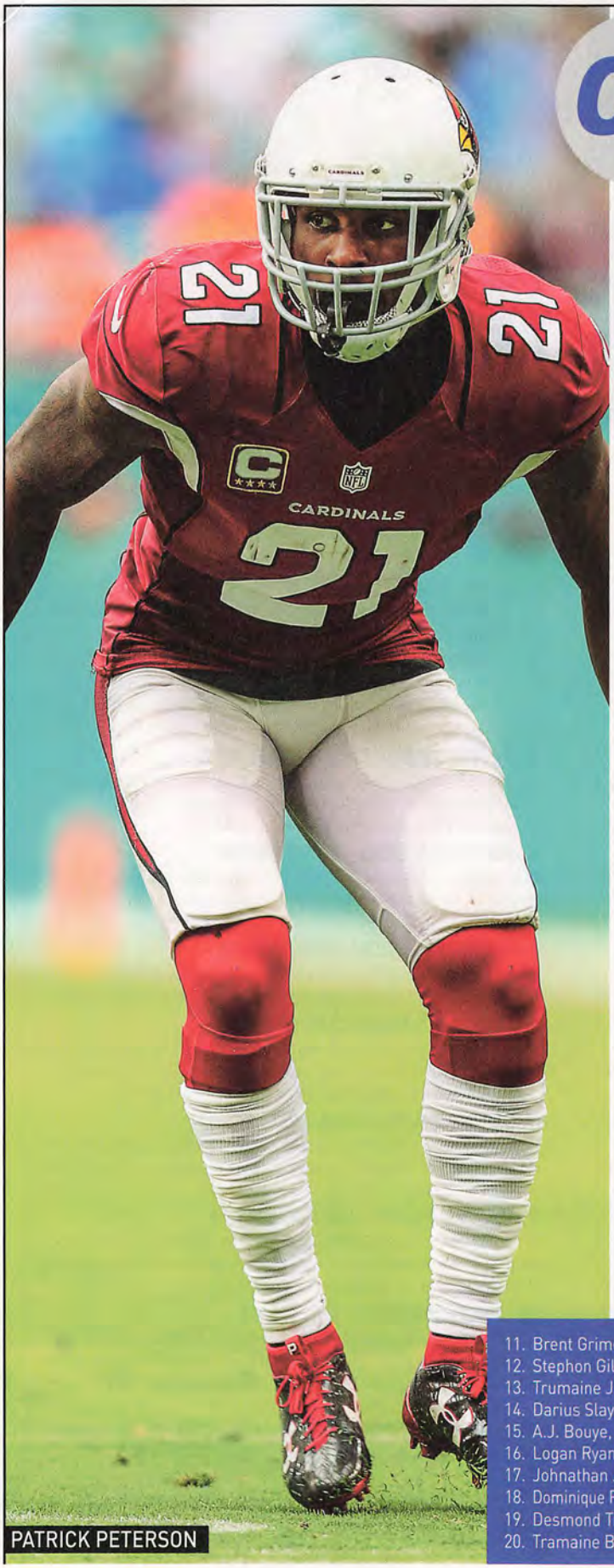
7. JAMIE COLLINS, CLEVELAND
Missed out on a second Super Bowl ring with New England when traded at midseason to Browns. A four-year, $50 million contract extension signed last February should serve as sufficient consolation.

8. BRUCE IRVIN, OAKLAND
Tied single-season franchise record for most forced fumbles with six in first season with Raiders. Will be even more effective if Oakland can upgrade interior pass rush.

9. TELVIN SMITH, JACKSONVILLE
NFL's lightest outside linebacker (218 pounds) overcomes a lack of heft with speed and athleticism. Three straight seasons of 100-plus tackles but can still improve recognition skills.

10. MARK BARRON, L.A. RAMS
A top-10 draft bust in Tampa Bay flourished with Rams after being converted to OLB in a 4-3 under former coordinator Gregg Williams. Will now shift inside with Williams' replacement Wade Phillips installing a 3-4 system.

11. Nigel Bradham, Philadelphia
12. Jonathan Casillas, N.Y. Giants
13. Malcolm Smith, San Francisco
14. Karlos Dansby, Arizona
15. Shaq Thompson, Carolina
16. Rob Ninkovich, New England
17. Mychal Kendricks, Philadelphia
18. De'Vondre Campbell, Atlanta
19. Elandon Roberts, New England
20. Dannell Ellerbe, New Orleans



PATRICK PETERSON

CB

1. PATRICK PETERSON, ARIZONA
Pity the cornerback aligned on the opposite side in Arizona's defense. The Cardinals must find a quality No. 2 corner this offseason because teams won't throw Peterson's way unless absolutely necessary.

2. RICHARD SHERMAN, SEATTLE
Has always talks a big game and continues to back up those words by essentially shutting down one side of the field in coverage. Also can trail elite NFL receivers on the outside or slot.

3. MARCUS PETERS, KANSAS CITY
Despite only entering the NFL in 2015, nobody has more interceptions (14) or passes defensed (46) over the past two seasons combined. Also produced 45 tackles and three fumble recoveries in 2016.

4. JOSH NORMAN, WASHINGTON
A true shutdown cornerback whose surprising 2016 offseason release by Carolina hurt the Panthers and boosted Washington's slumping secondary. The only downside: He must learn to better control on-field emotions to stop drawing penalties, fines and even NFL suspensions.

5. JANORIS JENKINS, N.Y. GIANTS
"Jackrabbit" hopped all over the field as New York's top cornerback, justifying the five-year, $62.5 million contract offered to leave the Rams. Snared two of the seven interceptions thrown all last season by Green Bay's Aaron Rodgers in a Week 4 matchup.

6. MALCOLM BUTLER, NEW ENGLAND
The rookie hero of Super Bowl XLIX continues to show he never became complacent with such early NFL fame. Led all Patriots cornerbacks in interceptions (four), passes defensed (17) and tackles (63) in 2016.

7. CHRIS HARRIS, DENVER
One of only five undrafted cornerbacks to reach Pro Bowl at least three times with team that signed him coming out of college. Teamed with Aqib Talib to become only second pair of CBs voted to Pro Bowl from same team for three straight seasons.

8. JALEN RAMSEY, JACKSONVILLE
Runner-up to Chargers defensive end Joey Bosa for 2016 NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year award. Opposing quarterbacks had a passer rating of 68.0 when throwing against the ex-Florida State standout despite targeting him on 90 passes.

9. AQIB TALIB, DENVER
Excellent nose for the football as reflected by franchise-record five interception returns for TDs since joining Broncos in 2014. Rugged playing style can sometimes lead to penalties but also can affect opposing wide receivers by getting under their skin.

10. XAVIER RHODES, MINNESOTA
Breakthrough 2016 season highlighted by limiting Giants wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr. to 23 receiving yards and registering two interceptions against Arizona, one of which he returned 100 yards for a TD. Such heroics resulted in first career Pro Bowl berth.

11. Brent Grimes, Tampa Bay
12. Stephon Gilmore, New England
13. Trumaine Johnson, L.A. Rams
14. Darius Slay, Detroit
15. A.J. Bouye, Jacksonville
16. Logan Ryan, Tennessee
17. Johnathan Joseph, Houston
18. Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie, N.Y. Giants
19. Desmond Trufant, Atlanta
20. Tramaine Brock, UFA
21. Delvin Breaux, New Orleans
22. Casey Hayward, L.A. Chargers
23. James Bradberry, Carolina
24. Morris Claiborne, N.Y. Jets
25. Captain Munnerlyn, Carolina
26. William Gay, Pittsburgh
27. Vontae Davis, Indianapolis
28. Dre Kirkpatrick, Cincinnati
29. Terence Newman, Minnesota
30. Jamar Taylor, Cleveland

Peterson: W.E. Smith II; Berry: Tim Umphrey

S

1. ERIC BERRY, KANSAS CITY
Overcame cancer on road to becoming highest-paid safety in NFL history after signing six-year, $78 million contract in the offseason. Money well earned after another stellar 2016 campaign highlighted by scoring eight points individually in road win over Atlanta.

2. LANDON COLLINS, N.Y. GIANTS
Almost won the NFL's Defensive Player of the Year Award after greatly improving his range following a shaky rookie season. Played in all but five of New York's 1,110 defensive snaps.

3. EARL THOMAS, SEATTLE
Seahawks defense wasn't the same after one of NFL's most astute defenders suffered season-ending leg injury in early December. Eighteen interceptions since 2011 rank fifth among all NFL players in that span.

4. MALCOLM JENKINS, PHILADELPHIA
Easily the best Eagles defensive back since the great Brian Dawkins left in free agency in 2009. Six career interceptions returned for touchdowns lead all active safeties.

5. KAM CHANCELLOR, SEATTLE
Provides the "Boom" in the Legion of Boom secondary at strong safety spot. Credited with at least five tackles in all 12 games played in 2016 plus two in postseason.

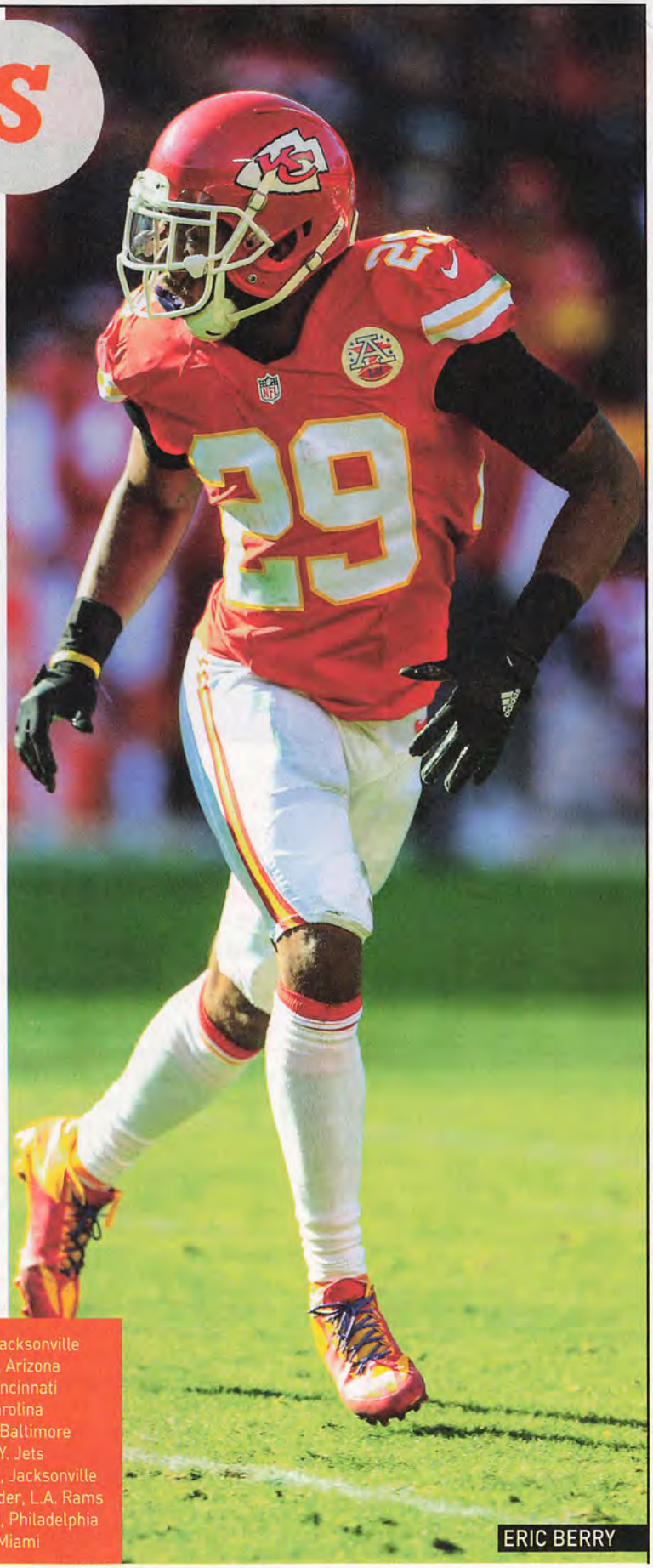
6. DEVIN McCOURTY, NEW ENGLAND
Was a very good cornerback who became an elite safety upon making position switch. Only player besides Rod Woodson and Ronnie Lott to garner All-Pro honors at both CB and safety.

7. ERIC WEDDLE, BALTIMORE
Change of scenery after nine seasons with Chargers proved to have a rejuvenating effect on Weddle, who was one of four safeties with at least four interceptions and one sack in 2016.

8. HA-HA CLINTON DIX, GREEN BAY
On-field growth reflected by five interceptions last year, the highest single-season total for a Packers defender since 2012. First Packers safety selected to Pro Bowl since Nick Collins in 2010.

9. HARRISON SMITH, MINNESOTA
NFL's only defender besides Carolina linebacker Luke Kuechly with at least 12 INTs and seven sacks since 2012. Looking to build on franchise record of four interceptions returned for touchdowns.

10. RESHAD JONES, MIAMI
Was on pace for career-high 136-tackle season before landing on injured reserve with a torn rotator cuff. Dolphins' faith that Jones can regain his old form proved via a five-year, $60 million contract extension this offseason.

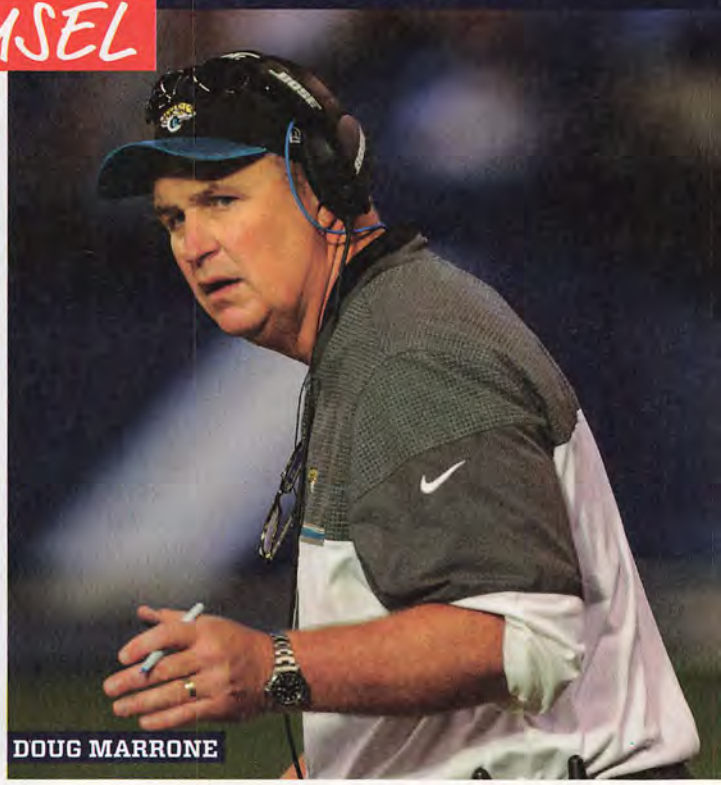


ERIC BERRY

11. Reggie Nelson, Oakland
12. Darian Stewart, Denver
13. T.J. Ward, Denver
14. Keanu Neal, Atlanta
15. Eric Reid, San Francisco
16. Mike Mitchell, Pittsburgh
17. Glover Quin, Detroit
18. Kurt Coleman, Carolina
19. Johnathan Cyprien, Tennessee
20. Antoine Bethea, Arizona
21. Barry Church, Jacksonville
22. Tyrann Mathieu, Arizona
23. George Iloka, Cincinnati
24. Mike Adams, Carolina
25. Tony Jefferson, Baltimore
26. Calvin Pryor, N.Y. Jets
27. Tashaun Gipson, Jacksonville
28. Maurice Alexander, L.A. Rams
29. Rodney McLeod, Philadelphia
30. T.J. McDonald, Miami

NFL COACHING CAROUSEL

SEAN McDERMOTT


DOUG MARRONE

BUFFALO BILLS

Old - Rex Ryan
New - Sean McDermott

Previous Job: Defensive Coordinator, Carolina Panthers

Pros: After two years of Rex Ryan's looseship approach and lackluster results, Buffalo switches gears to the detail-oriented McDermott. The former Carolina defensive coordinator is likely to play a 4-3 system under new coordinator Leslie Frazier that is better suited to the Bills' personnel after Ryan flipped them to a 3-4 when he arrived. McDermott's bluster-free approach also will provide a welcome respite for Bills fans who had grown weary of the previous regime's empty boasts.

Cons: Hiring a defensive specialist does nothing to address the team's primary shortcoming: the quarterback position. Even after their apparent offseason commitment to Tyrod Taylor, the Bills will enter the 2017 season without a proven professional passing attack. In today's NFL, that's a non-starter if you have your sights set on a playoff berth. It's also worth noting that McDermott's defense in Carolina fell from sixth in the NFL in the Super Bowl season of 2015 to 21st last season.

Final Analysis: McDermott has pieces to work with — a rushing offense that was the NFL's best and a defense adept at stopping the pass and forcing turnovers. It all comes down to the level of production that McDermott is able to coax out of the quarterback position.

DENVER BRONCOS

Old - Gary Kubiak
New - Vance Joseph

Previous Job: Defensive Coordinator, Miami Dolphins

Pros: Joseph brings a dose of youthful energy and enthusiasm to the Mile High City after playing his college football a few miles away in Boulder. His coach (and later his boss) at Colorado, Gary Barnett, called him a "natural leader" and gave him his first coaching job as a graduate assistant. Joseph's new boss, John Elway, also praised his leadership qualities and vision in announcing the hire. Joseph does represent a contrast to veteran coach Gary Kubiak, and he inherits a team that is only two years removed from a Super Bowl win. He'll be able to rely on one of the league's best defenses to carry the team while he finds his footing.

Cons: Joseph arrives after only one nondescript season as an NFL coordinator. His Dolphins defense ranked 29th in the league and 30th against the run. The team he inherits is getting older and faces uncertainty at the quarterback position — not exactly a red-carpet welcome for a coach who'll face Super Bowl-or-bust expectations from his fan base right out of the gate.

Final Analysis: We'll have to trust Elway on this one; he's proven to be a surprisingly shrewd executive with a demonstrated track record of success (four division titles and a Super Bowl win in his six seasons in charge). Obviously, he saw enough from the unproven Joseph to hand him the keys to his beloved Broncos.

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

Old - Gus Bradley
New - Doug Marrone

Previous Job: Assistant Head Coach/Offensive Line Coach (and interim Head Coach), Jacksonville Jaguars

Pros: Apparently a 1-1 finish to the season was enough for the Jags to remove the "interim" tag from Marrone, who took over in Week 16 for Bradley. Marrone did inject some life into the Jags offense, which averaged 442.5 yards and 29 points during his two-game audition. In particular, quarterback Blake Bortles seemed to thrive, posting two 300-yard passing games to close the season. The franchise is also bringing back former coach Tom Coughlin, who'll provide a steady hand as executive VP of football operations.

AP

Cons: Marrone has experience as an NFL head coach, but there's not much on his résumé to get excited about — a 15-17 record and no playoff appearances in two seasons in Buffalo. His stint ended ignominiously, as Marrone exercised his out clause despite the Bills' first winning season in a decade, much to the disgust of his players. His subsequent pursuit of the Jets job fizzled thanks to what league sources called a poor interview.

Final Analysis: It's the hiring of Coughlin, not Marrone, that is likely to get fans excited, as Coughlin provides a living reminder of the team's brief glory days of the late 1990s, when they had four winning seasons in a row. Otherwise, the rebuilding continues for a team that hasn't had a winning record or a playoff berth since 2007.

LOS ANGELES RAMS

Old - Jeff Fisher (John Fassel interim)
New - Sean McVay

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Washington Redskins

Pros: After shedding themselves of Jeff Fisher and his 22 years of head coaching experience, the Rams turn to the 31-year-old McVay, the youngest head coach in NFL history. There's no question that Fisher's approach had become stale; his last winning season as an NFL head coach came in 2008. If nothing else, McVay provides a needed injection of optimism for a franchise that hasn't had a winning record since 2003. Los Angeles hopes McVay can do for quarterback Jared Goff what he did for Kirk Cousins in Washington; in the last two seasons under McVay's tutelage, Cousins posted passer ratings of 101.6 and 97.2, with a touchdown-to-interception ratio of 54-to-23.

Cons: McVay has drawn comparisons to Jon Gruden, so there's a danger that his intense, rah-rah approach will wear out its welcome, especially if the losses start to mount. What happens when the team struggles? Will the veterans tune out a guy who's basically their age, if not younger?

Final Analysis: To allay the youth concerns, McVay and his bosses made a savvy hire in defensive coordinator Wade Phillips, who will provide a steady hand while McVay establishes himself. This combination might represent the most intriguing regime change of the offseason, and owner Stan Kroenke deserves plaudits for a bold gamble that could pay off by the time the team moves into its new stadium for the 2019 season.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS

Old - Mike McCoy
New - Anthony Lynn

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator/Running Backs Coach/Interim Head Coach, Buffalo Bills

Pros: Lynn guided the best rushing attack in the NFL in 2016 in Buffalo, and he inherits a young, ascendant running back in Melvin Gordon who calls Lynn "perfect" for his continued development. Lynn made the best of his limited raw materials in Buffalo, and he has much more to work with now, starting with a franchise quarterback in Philip Rivers who will ease the transition and allow Lynn to focus his attention elsewhere.

Cons: As with many others on this list, Lynn lacks experience, and not merely as a head coach — he had never even been a coordinator until Week 3 of the 2016 season. The Chargers have proven commodities at virtually every position, but their new leader is anything but. Any missteps will be magnified now that the Chargers are in the media capital of the West Coast.

Final Analysis: Lynn has some good players in key spots, but he's a first-time head coach. He'll face a challenge with the Chargers' move to Los Angeles, a city that's not exactly rolling out the welcome mat (the team will play in the 27,000-seat StubHub Center until the opening of the new stadium in 2019). Despite Lynn's youth and inexperience, his players in Buffalo raved about him as a leader. He'll need every bit of his leadership acumen as the franchise navigates its controversial relocation.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Old - Chip Kelly
New - Kyle Shanahan

Previous Job: Offensive Coordinator, Atlanta Falcons

Pros: The son of Super Bowl-winning coach Mike Shanahan, Kyle has been an NFL head-coach-in-training from an early age, becoming the youngest coordinator in the NFL when he was handed the offensive reins in Houston in 2008 at age 28. His most recent stop has been easily his most successful — Shanahan's 2016 offense in Atlanta led the NFL in scoring and was second in total yardage. He's the highest-paid first-time head coach in league history, and he'll be making personnel decisions along with first-time GM John Lynch. The fact that they inherit a mess means their early tenure will be accompanied by patience from their bosses, who were clearly in desperation mode when they hired them.

Cons: In his two stops prior to Atlanta — offensive coordinator for his dad in Washington (2010-13) and offensive coordinator in Cleveland (2014) — Shanahan's tenure ended in disaster. If his last name weren't Shanahan, it would have been difficult to recover from those two forgettable entries on his résumé. He had much more talent at his disposal in Atlanta (not to mention a climate-controlled home environment) than he'll enjoy in San Francisco.

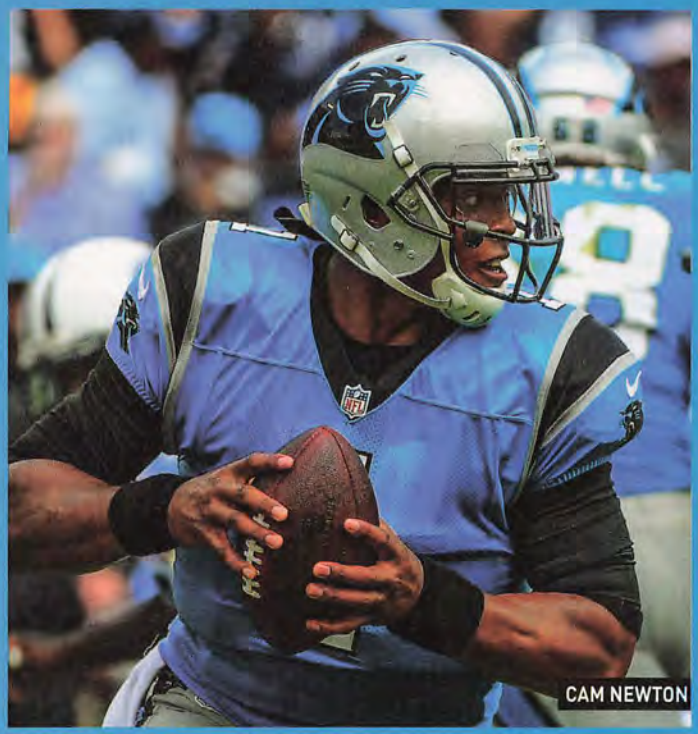
Final Analysis: There's really nowhere to go but up for the Niners, and any signs of progress will be welcomed in San Fran as signs of the young head coach's genius. It's almost a risk-free move for both parties, at least for the short term.

KYLE SHANAHAN

RIGHT ON SCHEDULE

Who Are the Real Sleeper Teams? Just Look at the Schedules

BY RIVERS McCOWN



CAM NEWTON

RICHARD SHERMAN

The Panthers' prospects for a bounce-back season are enhanced by a schedule that adds the Jets and Bears and includes a date with San Francisco. Meanwhile, the Seahawks boast a schedule that could yield as many as 13 wins.

While the competitive balance that free agency, the salary cap and draft picks bestowed was ballyhooed for a few years in the 1990s, the truth about the NFL is that the same teams often win. There's an oligarchy in place. The Patriots, Steelers and Ravens haven't stayed down for long even if they turned in a sub-par season on occasion. In the NFC, the same thing goes for Seattle and Green Bay.

Other teams briefly have joined this ruling class only to stumble out of it: the 49ers when they fired Jim Harbaugh, the Eagles when they fired Andy Reid, the Chargers when they stopped drafting well, the Colts when the team around Peyton Manning and Andrew Luck stopped carrying its share. And so on. The NFL is better understood as a game of windows for good teams. Organizations can't exactly control their circumstances on a game-to-game basis, but they can create a good enough team to perennially make the playoffs and let the chips fall where they may.

And then there are the sleepers. Sometimes they are already part of the oligarchy but have an unexpectedly high win total. And, sometimes, the sleeper teams come from divisions without an established hierarchy. It wasn't a total surprise that the Chiefs and Raiders made the playoffs last season, especially since Denver went with the untested Trevor Siemian as its starting quarterback. The surprise was that both those teams finished with 12 wins. Carolina came out of nowhere in 2015, not only winning the NFC South but also finishing 15–1 and heading to the Super Bowl. Las Vegas sportsbooks had put their win over/under heading into the season at 8.5.

The one thing all three of those teams had in common, outside of good fortune in terms of turnover margin, is that they all played four games against the AFC South.

Long known as the cupcakes that Manning would feast on every year, the AFC South has been a dreadful division top to bottom since Manning's departure. Last year, it was a division won by a team that paid Brock Osweiler $37 million in guaranteed money. So, while the Chiefs and Raiders were both good teams, their schedule got a little boost. Oakland went 4–0 against the AFC South, and Kansas City went 2–2, losing two games by a combined nine points. (Imagine the hype for the Chiefs had they gone 14–2, which easily could have happened.) The 2015 Panthers went 4–0 against the AFC South.

So while we don't inherently know the quality of every team heading into the year, we have a pretty good estimation of most of them. Every year, each division plays two different divisions outside of home-and-homes in their own division and a few other games against teams that finished with the same standing in their respective division. Here's how we expect that to play out this year.

AFC East: Plays the NFC South and AFC West

Neither the NFC South nor AFC West projects to have any out-and-out dreadful teams this year, which is foreboding news for the odds of a non-Patriots team making the playoffs again like Miami did last year. There's at least a decent argument that the Buccaneers are a team on the rise, and that a healthy Chargers team could go worst-to-first. At the same time, outside of Kansas City and Oakland, I would argue that each of these teams has exploitable flaws. I would expect this division to lean toward a tougher schedule.

Newton: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Sherman, Carr: Peter Brouillet

The bounce-back pick: Buffalo also adds games against Indianapolis and Cincinnati, so if new head coach Sean McDermott can improve the defense, things could be interesting in December.

AFC North: Plays the AFC South and NFC North

This is a great time to believe in a bounce-back for the Ravens. OK, so Aaron Rodgers is on the schedule. Outside of that, Cleveland is a dead-on-arrival franchise until proven otherwise, and Cincinnati looks less talented than it's been in some time. Chicago has no quarterback, nor does Jacksonville. Detroit and Houston were last year's two weakest playoff teams by most analytical measures, and the only team that has made a real investment in improving itself for 2017 in either division is Tennessee. This is a schedule that is very conducive for both Baltimore and Pittsburgh to make the playoffs, and possibly a schedule that could get them both to 11 wins or more.

The bounce-back pick: I can't in good conscience tell you to believe in Cincinnati, but it won't be surprising if Cleveland enjoys a mildly successful season and takes down five or six wins against this schedule.

AFC South: Plays the AFC North and NFC West

For the AFC South, life also sets up pretty well. Each team is guaranteed games against Cleveland and San Francisco, at this point the two worst teams in the NFL. Cincinnati is weaker than it's been before, and the Rams are handcuffed to Jared Goff, who was dreadful in 2016. While the upper crust of the schedule is a little scary between Pittsburgh and Seattle, this could easily work out in a way that gives us our first 10-win AFC South team since 2014. It enhances the stock of both Tennessee and Houston, especially if Houston finds a quarterback.

The bounce-back pick: I'm done betting on Jacksonville until Blake Bortles is put away, but if Andrew Luck enters pure witchcraft mode, the schedule sets up nicely for the Colts to make a playoff run.

AFC West: Plays the NFC East and AFC East

While Washington had a rough offseason, the rest of the NFC East looks loaded for bear. The middle of the AFC East was quite competitive in 2016, and the idea of Buffalo having a real defense again after two years in the Rex Ryan Exotic Scheme Zone should be a little terrifying. The only cupcake looks to be the Jets, who have no proven quarterback and couldn't rush the passer in 2016. Overall, I'd say the odds are against the AFC West having two playoff teams again. It's not a horrific schedule, but it's solidly above average.

The bounce-back pick: The Chargers played good defense in 2016 but continued not to be able to run the ball and watched Philip Rivers fade down the stretch. Fresh eyes at head coach in Anthony Lynn could be very helpful, and they pick up games against the Browns and Jaguars because of their last-place finish.

NFC East: Plays the AFC West and NFC West

Much like the AFC West's slate, this sets up as a couple of potential creampuffs (the Rams and 49ers) nailed to a bunch of live teams. Denver's defense is a matchup problem, and outside of the Broncos there's not a bad quarterback in the AFC West. Seattle and Arizona remain dangerous to some degree. There's nothing here that should stop the Giants and Cowboys from making the playoffs if they play to their potential, but it's about an average schedule.

The bounce-back pick: The Eagles played terrific defense in 2016, especially when you consider that they had no quality cornerbacks on the roster. Between the potential of a Carson Wentz improvement with new receivers, more games from Lane Johnson and a game against the 49ers, there are a lot of ways for them to make some progress.

NFC North: Plays the AFC North and NFC South

Games against the Bears and Browns will help these teams, but the NFC South is capable of scoring on anyone, and the NFC North isn't exactly loaded with great defenses outside of Minnesota. The Vikings are probably the team most capable of making a leap here, and dates against the Rams and Washington help the cause. However, Minnesota didn't exactly go out and improve the team beyond trying to make the offensive line passable.

The bounce-back pick: Minnesota, though I'd sure feel a lot better about that if I saw they were able to run the offense they did for the first four weeks of 2016.

NFC South: Plays the NFC North and AFC East

This is essentially a neutral schedule for the South, which adds the Jets and Bears, as well as potential regression candidate Detroit, but also has to deal with the Patriots and Packers. And in a division that always seems to be up for grabs, don't forget about the benefit that third- and last-place schedules can provide. Carolina will get a game against the 49ers, while New Orleans picks up games against Washington and the Rams.

The bounce-back pick: I mean, Cam Newton was the MVP in 2015, right? We didn't just dream that, did we? Improved health on the offensive line and more games from Luke Kuechly and corner James Bradberry should at least get the Panthers back closer to .500.

NFC West: Plays the AFC South and NFC East

What a time to be a Seahawks fan. Not only did the rest of the division implode around them the last few years, but this schedule also combines low-key games against the 49ers with the relative breeze that is the AFC South. Nobody should be surprised if the Seahawks post a 13-win year against this schedule. And by the same token, nobody should be surprised if Arizona is able to bounce back to the playoffs between health improvements on the offensive line and receiver group and a little boost from the patsies they play.

The bounce-back pick: Arizona. Though the defense will miss Calais Campbell, I could see the Cardinals riding this schedule to a lower playoff seed.

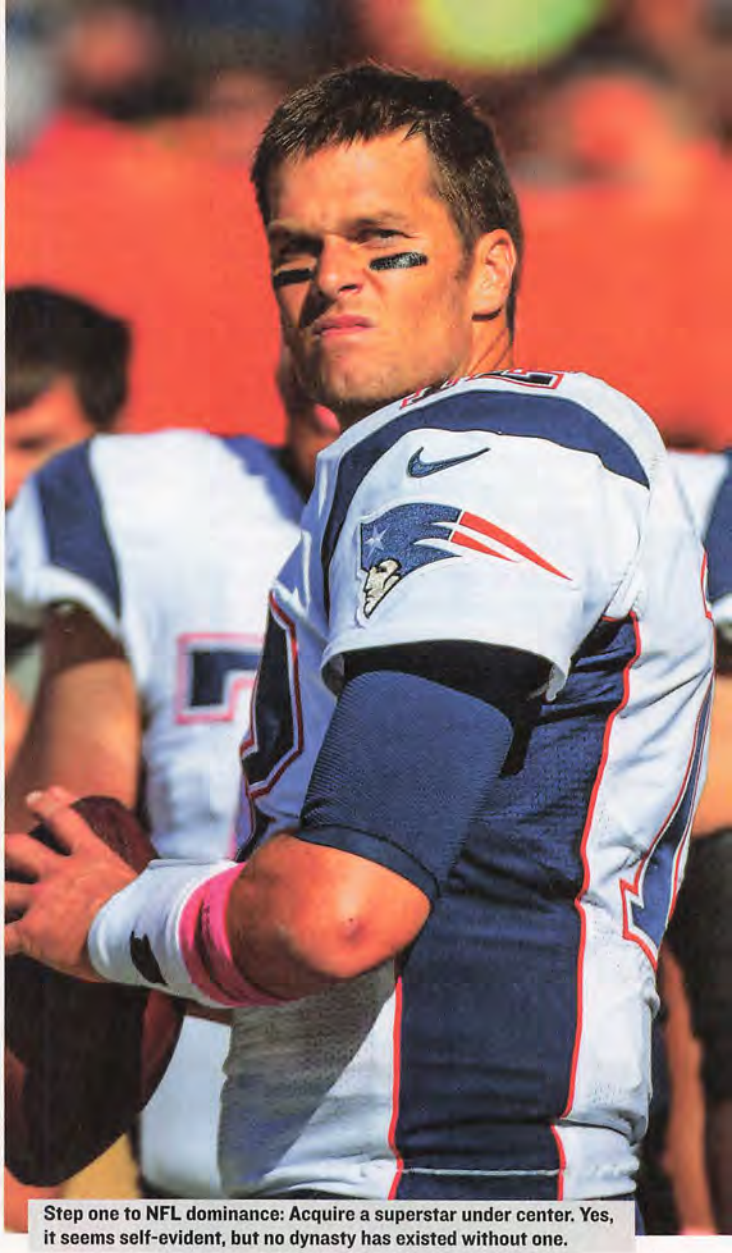
DEREK CARR

Oakland was a much-improved team in 2016, but having the weak AFC South on the schedule certainly didn't hurt.

THE PATRIOTS WAY

Five Analytical Lessons of New England's Dominance of the NFL

BY RIVERS McCOWN



Step one to NFL dominance: Acquire a superstar under center. Yes, it seems self-evident, but no dynasty has existed without one.

After last season's come-from-behind Super Bowl win, there's no doubting that the New England Patriots are the NFL's model franchise. Yes, it feels awkward to say that given the number of "-gates" they've been involved in, but the results don't allow us to see it any other way.

They've won two of the last three Super Bowls. They've won five Super Bowls over the last 16 years and appeared in two others. No other NFL franchise over this span of time has won even three titles. The only team that's won two — the New York Giants — have a large part of their current identity tied up in being the thorn in New England's side.

But what lessons can we learn from New England's dominance on a broader analytical scale? There are a couple that are pretty obvious, and there are some that are maybe a little more subtle.

1) Having an established star quarterback is the easiest path to contention in the NFL

Let's start with the easy one. There are a lot of ways a team can actually win a Super Bowl. The Denver Broncos won with a dominating defense and essentially no passing game. The Baltimore Ravens won with a downfield passing attack that clicked at the right time. As long as your team is good enough to make the playoffs, the natural variance of football means that there are matchups to win. Win enough of them in any given game, and an inferior team can pull an upset. The important thing is simply making the dance in the first place.

But there is no easier path to year-to-year relevance in the current, pass-happy NFL than having a star quarterback. Tom Brady, New England's future Hall of Famer, developed from good to great over the first few years of his career. Since then, the cogs around him have changed. Whether the offense is running through Deion Branch, Corey Dillon, Rob Gronkowski or Julian Edelman, the one constant is Brady.

You see similar lessons from Brady's best quarterback contemporaries. Peyton Manning in the AFC South was essentially a cheat code to 10-plus wins and the playoffs. When Ben Roethlisberger has started for the Steelers, they're 69 games over .500. Aaron Rodgers and the Packers are 48 games over .500. Having Drew Brees is an annual reason that the Saints are on the fringes of the playoffs despite fielding perhaps the worst defense in the NFL over the last five years. Russell Wilson and a good defense have made Seattle one of the surest bets for 10 wins in the NFL today despite the worst offensive line in the league.

NFL teams can win without a great quarterback. Great quarterbacks can falter in a one-game sample. But over a long period of time, nothing is a better barometer of consistent winning than having one.

2) Trade down in the draft

The classic problem an NFL team has is believing they are one player away from a championship. One draft pick can swing a whole franchise, but the odds of that happening over the long haul are pretty rare. Atlanta trading up for Julio Jones in the draft, for instance, was an exception rather than a likely outcome.

While some teams — such as San Francisco in the Jim Harbaugh era — have emulated Bill Belichick's aggressive strategy of trading down in the draft, nobody is as good at it as the master. One Grantland article in 2015 noted that Belichick had made 48 trades in his New England tenure solely involving draft picks. One way to determine the value of draft picks is a chart from pro-football-reference.com that measures the average "AV," or approximate value, the pick has over five seasons. By that measure — as the Grantland story notes — Belichick added 80.6 points in AV to the Patriots with those trades, a number that is equivalent to the first overall pick, second overall pick, and nineteenth overall pick put together.

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Ayers: Jessica Rinaldi/The Boston Globe via Getty Images

And over the last two drafts, the trend continued. Belichick found a fourth-rounder in the 2017 draft by giving away a fifth-rounder in 2016. In 2015, the Pats added fourth-, fifth- and seventh-rounders from the Browns for a third and a seventh. By taking advantage of over-confident bets from other teams, the Patriots come out ahead.

3) Rehabilitating players for the compensation picks

As of 2016, New England has made 31 compensatory picks under Belichick. To explain compensation picks briefly: They are part of a competitive balance measure to compensate teams that lose free agents with picks. They are awarded based on a complicated formula that the NFL hasn't made public, but they mostly involve players leaving during free agency and the dollar amounts that they get. That creates an interesting cycle for New England.

The Patriots lost some free agents in the 2015 offseason. Darrelle Revis left, as did long-time Patriots Stevan Ridley, Shane Vereen and Vince Wilfork. But the Pats also made a couple of pick-for-player and pick trades during the 2014 season. One of those was for linebacker Jonathan Casillas, and another was for linebacker Akeem Ayers. The Pats got four sacks out of Ayers after the Titans had left him for dead, then immediately let him walk as a free agent. Ayers' redemption season cost the Pats almost nothing, and he was part of the exodus that allowed New England four extra picks in the 2016 draft.

The Patriots often take on these sorts of rehab projects based on pure athleticism and see what happens. They acquired a pair of former second-round picks last season — linebacker Kyle Van Noy and corner Eric Rowe — for basically nothing. If the Pats only get sub-standard play, well, compensation picks make it a win-win chance for them. If they happen to run into a breakout star while giving the former hot prospects a chance — something like what happened with Dion Lewis in 2015 — all the better.

4) Excellence on special teams

Football Outsiders uses a statistic called DVOA — Defense-Adjusted Value Over Average — that basically offers a schedule-adjusted measurement of how far above average a unit is. DVOA splits into three sections: offense, defense and special teams. Under Belichick, the Patriots have finished in the top 10 in special teams DVOA in every season since 2010. They've been above average at special teams in every single year of Belichick's tenure.

Akeem Ayers is but one of many reasonably priced castoffs who have helped the Patriots maintain their excellence in the Bill Belichick era.

While special teams are largely overlooked by football fans because of the relative lack of impact the kicking game has compared to offense and defense, they absolutely matter. On kickoffs and in punt coverage, the Patriots made up so many points off of field position in 2016 that it didn't even matter that they endured the worst season of Stephen Gostkowski's career on field goals and extra point attempts. The unit as a whole was making the difference in close games on a weekly basis, giving the Pats just another little edge on the competition.

5) Taking advantage of the win-now window

And, finally, one edge the Patriots have over every other team in the league is that they are the only team in the NFL that seems to both a) have a win-now mindset that appeals to veterans and b) still embraces the talent so much that it's willing to integrate a few eccentric personalities. Simply put, the Patriots are where players go when they're sick of their careers being about pointless stat accumulation and want to get serious about winning. That is the brand that the Patriots have built over the years.

The best example of this is probably Randy Moss, a future Hall of Famer whom New England acquired for a fourth-round pick after he wore out his welcome in Oakland. Moss helped the New England offense set records and brought his play up to the level he was always capable of after a few lackadaisical years with the Raiders.

Last year's example was Martellus Bennett, the former Bears star tight end who can both catch and block. Acquiring him gave the Patriots the same kind of dynamic two-tight-end set they had in the early 2010s, before we all learned who Aaron Hernandez really was. Bennett had a decent season for the Patriots on paper, reeling in 55 catches for 701 yards and seven scores. But he was limited by a bum ankle and had problems blocking and pushing off all year.

Bennett, of course, was perceived as an "attitude problem" by the no-nonsense Bears staff. The Patriots acquired him by swapping the 127th overall pick for the 204th overall pick. Even though it didn't work out as ideally as it appeared on paper, the Pats covered for another devastating Rob Gronkowski injury, and Bennett caught five balls in the Super Bowl.

To be clear, sometimes this doesn't work out, and the Patriots wind up with Chad Ochocinco, but that doesn't stop them from taking a small risk that could potentially improve the team. The worst-case scenario is that they are out a lower-round draft pick.

Revis, Dillon, Rodney Harrison, Junior Seau, Chris Long, LeGarrette Blount — the names could roll on. Teams that are this good often get very arrogant about their evaluations. They don't want to mess up team chemistry, and they assume that available players are unwanted for a good reason. The Patriots didn't care about Bennett's or Moss' potential for sulking, or about Harrison's and Seau's advanced age. They simply saw opportunities to pick up the kind of player normally unavailable to them and pounced all over them before anyone else did.

AARON RODGERS FINDS THE *FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH*

Rodgers is seemingly defying Father Time, but then again, so are a number of elder statesmen at the game's defining position

BY JASON WILDE

There was a time — not all that long ago, actually — when Aaron Rodgers was already planning for life after football. He'd led the Green Bay Packers to their first Super Bowl title on his watch — the first of what would be multiple NFL titles, he wholeheartedly believed — in 2010, standing atop the victory podium at the ripe old age of 27. The way he figured it, another nine, 10 seasons tops would be enough.

He wasn't going to be a lifer, having entered the league as a self-assured 21-year-old kid, surviving an excruciatingly long time trapped in the green room during his freefall at the 2005 NFL Draft before serving a three-year apprenticeship on the Packers' bench. Even after all that waiting, he was certain he could carve out a Pro Football Hall of Fame legacy during a 15-, 16-year run and walk away from the game while he could still, well, walk. Then it would be on to other pursuits — documentary filmmaking, charity work, coaching high school kids, relaunching his music label, whatever.

But then, something changed. Actually, a lot did. For starters, inspired by his friend, Patriots star Tom Brady, Rodgers revamped his diet a couple of years ago, realizing he could improve his health and his long-term football-playing prospects by changing what he ate. An inquisitive, intellectual fellow by nature, he began researching nutrition like he would an upcoming opponent's defensive strengths and weaknesses, giving up sweets — his culinary Kryptonite — and removing lactose from his diet, much to the chagrin of some in the Dairy State.

Left: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Right: Tom Pennington/Getty Images

Meanwhile, Rodgers hearkened back to the three years he spent as Hall of Famer Brett Favre's understudy from 2005-07, watching as the iconic quarterback struggled with a changing locker room that was growing younger and younger as he got older and grayer.

Rodgers was there during that surreal summer of 2008 when Favre's 16-year run as the face of the franchise ended with an acrimonious divorce and awkward transition to Rodgers. Favre, who'd announced his retirement that spring after years of will-he-or-won't-he drama, went on to play three more NFL seasons (one with the New York Jets, two with the rival Minnesota Vikings) before retiring after the 2010 season, at age 41.

From watching all that unfold, Rodgers learned two lessons that he believes are more important now, at age 33, than ever before: Find a way to stay relevant and connected to the youngsters who enter your locker room each year, and do everything you can to make sure your employer never has a reason to give your job to somebody else.

"I think as you get older and you see a lot of your friends move on, retire, get cut, get injured and stop playing, you have that point where you think about your own career and how long you can go," says Rodgers, who will be entering his 13th year in the NFL and 10th as the Packers' starting quarterback. "And for me, I got even more motivated to be an irreplaceable part of our team. And in doing that, I also think I started to really have a greater awareness of my surroundings and enjoy the little things more — the preparation, the meetings, the practice. And when you're loving those things, the game is really icing on the cake for you.

"I love to compete and love to play. So for me, it was a natural progression to enjoy it even more and to want to play it as long as I can at a high level."

To that end, Rodgers significantly altered his diet. The same guy who used to proudly walk into In-N-Out Burger and order his off-the-menu "double-double animal style" usual, abruptly reduced his red-meat intake. The same guy who'd been photographed with his then-girlfriend, actress Olivia Munn, at the 2016 Academy Awards munching on Girl Scout cookies didn't place an order this year. While he may not have his own cookbook like Brady does, and he isn't extolling the virtues of avocado ice cream, Rodgers is definitely following the Patriots quarterback's lead in the kitchen.

"For sure. Tom takes really, really good care of his body — and has for a long time — and he understands what it takes to get that longevity," Rodgers says of Brady, who'll turn 40 on Aug. 3 and just engineered the greatest comeback in Super Bowl history in February. "What I tease him about — and actually applaud him for — is, it seems like the older he's gotten, the more athletic he's gotten. He had a 15-yard run in the Super Bowl for a first down; he's actually moved in the pocket more and made more plays out of the pocket, which has added another dimension to his game, which obviously helped him a lot [last] season. Down the stretch of [the Super Bowl], he was able to keep plays alive and move and make accurate throws."

That has long been a key part of Rodgers' game — his improvisational keep-the-play-alive ability with his legs is one of his best traits — and must remain so in order for him to play at the level he demands. Thus, making sure his legs don't fail him is vital — not because he wants to be a running quarterback into his 40s, but because he wants to be able to extend plays in order to make big-play throws.

Asked if he believes Rodgers can play into his 40s, Packers coach Mike McCarthy's reply is as quick as a Rodgers release. "I mean mentally and physically, clearly yes. He has that ability. I think there's no question there. But I think all positions in football are the same. It's their legs. You watch a player — and it's no different with quarterbacks — as long as they have their legs, they can compete at that level.

"Just with anything in life, the more education, the more [information] that's available to you. If you do have good fortune and good health and you're able to keep playing at a high level, I think these guys will play a lot longer than the generation before them."

But for Rodgers, altering his diet and workout regimen to increase his longevity is only half the equation. Being able to play into your 40s is of no value if you don't actually want to still play, so rediscovering his passion for the game — while simultaneously seeing so many of his longtime teammates depart — has been just as important.

"Football has become even more fun for me," Rodgers says. "And I think it's a slight change that happened the last few years, where it really has become just a love affair. [It's gone] from a game I always enjoyed playing and enjoyed competing and am hyper competitive in, to just really loving the process even more — the practice, the preparation, just enjoying those moments even more.

"And that has kind of given me the idea that, 'This is what I want to do. I love football, and I want to keep playing as long as possible.' When you have that kind of slight shift in your thinking, then you start going to, 'How can I do that?' And the way you can do that in my opinion is taking care of yourself at a hyper-sensitive level to all the areas that that entails — the rehab area, the eating area, the workout/focus area. And all those combined has kind of given me the idea that I'd like to keep playing at a high level. And [as a result] it's as fun as it is right now."

Teammates who've been with Rodgers the longest — remarkably, only six players remain from that Super Bowl XLV-winning team of 2010, including Rodgers — say that despite all the love-of-the-game talk, what remains Rodgers' most driving on-field motivation is his ultra-competitive personality, which extends beyond just football.

"His competitive nature, it's hard to match that. I think all of us in this building have that fire and that competition in us, but he definitely leads that charge," kicker Mason Crosby, Rodgers' teammate since 2007, said during the 2016 season. "Especially through this season, the ups and downs we've had, his competitive fire has been a confidence-builder for a lot of guys in here."

Adds wide receiver Jordy Nelson, who joined the Packers in 2008 and is one of Rodgers' closest remaining friends on the team: "[Rodgers' competitive fire] is the most intense I've ever seen — on little things. From cards to games to a water balloon fight at the dorms [during training camp], he's always trying to one-up someone else."

And perhaps that's part of the equation, too, though Rodgers might be loath to admit it. Though pained by the seemingly yearly departures of his longest-tenured teammates — from linebacker A.J. Hawk to fullback John Kuhn to wide receiver James Jones — Rodgers might also be just competitive enough to want to make sure his career in Green Bay doesn't end the way Favre's did. If he can deliver another title or two to Titletown — and leave on his own terms — his legacy in Green Bay just might surpass that of his predecessor.

Of course, for now, Rodgers is simply focused on 2017 and making sure he enjoys every moment, not just on game day but every day.

"With A.J. getting released [after the 2014 season] and John Kuhn moving on [after 2015], and James Jones not coming back, [that's] a lot of close friends that I still keep in contact with very regularly moving on. I think that starts to make you think about your own duration and career and how long you want to play.

"I think part of it is, the pressure of practice is way less for me. Obviously, I want to go out and perform every day and make the plays that I know I can make so I have good images for when I'm on the field. But as a young player, you put so much into those reps, and it's not quite as fun because every play is so important to you.

"When that kind of goes away and you're an established player and you can start working on little things within plays, within segments of practice, everything becomes a lot more enjoyable because it becomes a chess match out there, not only with the defense that you're seeing but with yourself, on what you can show yourself you can do and then what you can do to the guys you are playing against."

NEARING THE END?

Two thoughts ran through Mike McCarthy's mind while he watched Super Bowl LI, as the New England Patriots staged a comeback for the ages to win their fifth NFL title.

Ever the competitor, the Green Bay Packers coach couldn't help but think his team could have been there, despite its poor showing in its NFC Championship Game loss to the Atlanta Falcons. But his other thought was one of pure respect and admiration for what a 39-year-old Tom Brady did as the Patriots turned a 28-3 deficit into a 34-28 overtime victory.

So when someone asked about Brady's plans to play into his 40s, McCarthy made it clear he was among the believers.

"You can only go by what's on film. And based on his last game, he will accomplish that. I would bet on that," McCarthy said during the NFC coaches breakfast at the annual NFL Meetings in Phoenix in March. "But there's a lot of factors that go into that. I think you have to give these athletes an incredible amount of credit for what they're doing. With the rest and recovery and nutrition, I think you're now seeing the decade of what it's provided. It's provided for guys to play longer, especially at that position."

Ask your average NFL fan to name the best quarterbacks in the game today, and you're likely to hear many of the same names over and over. Brady. Aaron Rodgers. Drew Brees. Ben Roethlisberger. Philip Rivers. Carson Palmer.

Obviously, Atlanta's Matt Ryan, the reigning NFL MVP, is part of that discussion. Carolina's Cam Newton [the 2015 MVP], Seattle's Russell Wilson, Detroit's Matthew Stafford, Indianapolis' Andrew Luck and Oakland's Derek Carr are, too. And young up-and-comers such as Tampa Bay's Jameis Winston, Dallas' Dak Prescott and Tennessee's Marcus Mariota are trending upward. They appear to be the next generation of stars at the position.

The NFL surely hopes so, for despite Brady's long-term plans, the harsh reality for the league is that many of its biggest-name signal callers are much closer to the end of their careers than the beginning. In the next three to four years, Brady, Brees, Roethlisberger, Rivers and Palmer are all likely to retire.

In April, another household name, Dallas' Tony Romo, decided against continuing his playing career elsewhere and took a television job with CBS, where he'll be on the network's No. 1 broadcast team. Romo, 37, opened the 2016 season as the Cowboys' starter but was usurped by Prescott after a preseason back injury. He said in announcing his retirement that his injuries and his family factored into his decision, emphasizing that he believed he could have continued his playing career.

"I could play tomorrow," Romo said. "I'm making this decision with the choice to be able to play as well. Do I envision coming back and playing football? Absolutely not. I'm committed to CBS for good. Do I think I'm going to get some calls? I'm sure I will."

So with Romo retired, who's next? Of the six best-known members of the NFL's 35-and-over quarterback club, who'll hang up his cleats the soonest? Here's a look at each of these QBs as the 2017 season approaches.

Carson Palmer, Arizona Cardinals

14th NFL season

Opening-day age: 37

Palmer already retired once —

sort of. That was after the 2010 season, when he was fed up with the Cincinnati Bengals' annual struggles and decided to walk away — or, at least, force the Bengals' hand. He was ultimately dealt to the Oakland Raiders, then subsequently to Arizona, where he's had a career renaissance under coach Bruce Arians. He's had two major knee surgeries — having torn the anterior cruciate ligament in his left knee in 2005 and again in 2013 — but stayed healthy in 2016, allowing the Cardinals to move forward with him as their starter.

That said, Arians made it clear this spring that it's important to have Palmer's heir at the ready, especially after the Cardinals were unprepared for Kurt Warner's retirement after the 2009 season, a year earlier than the team had anticipated.

"I don't want that to happen to the organization again," Arians says. "I wouldn't say this is Carson's last year. Just like Brady is saying he wants to play five more years, I think Carson, it will be hard for him to say, 'I'm done.' He's still healthy."

Drew Brees, New Orleans Saints
17th NFL season Opening-day age: 38

Brees, who has led the NFL in passing yardage in five of the past six seasons, has given no indication that he plans to call it quits anytime soon, and why should he? While the Saints have struggled in the seven seasons since winning the Super Bowl after the 2009 season, Brees remains atop his game. Last season, he led the NFL in completions (471), attempts (673) and yards (5,208).

"I'm playing year to year, and creating a sense of urgency each year because I want to come here with the Vince Lombardi Trophy again," Brees said on Ellen DeGeneres' talk show after the season. "I don't plan on going anywhere for a while, but I do also want to value each and every year. And it doesn't really matter what my contract looks like to me, whether it's long term or short term, because to me, I have to prove myself each and every year, prove that I'm the guy to quarterback that team and to lead that team and to help us win a championship.

"Eventually, I just want to go out on my terms, and when I do, it's just going to be to step into the next chapter of my life, which is going to be all about my family and coaching my kids."

Eli Manning, New York Giants
14th NFL season Opening-day age: 36

Manning has never given any indication that he's contemplating retirement, and with his older brother Peyton having retired just shy of his 40th birthday, there's no reason to believe Eli is thinking of walking away before then. The younger Manning did admit, though, that when the Giants made the playoffs last season after a four-year post-Super Bowl drought, he found himself appreciating the postseason berth more than he had previous ones, knowing that time is of the essence.

"You can get spoiled early in your career when four years in a row you make the playoffs and you assume that's kind of the norm," Eli said before the Giants' wild card loss to the Packers. "You play long enough, you realize it is special to be in contention to make the playoffs. ... You appreciate the wins and appreciate how hard it is and you want to take advantage of it."

ELI MANNING

Philip Rivers, Los Angeles Chargers
14th NFL season
Opening-day age: 35

Like Manning, who was in the same 2004 NFL Draft, Rivers hasn't said anything about considering retirement — at least, not lately. He did think about it following an injury-plagued 2014 season, but then he signed a four-year contract extension. "Physically, I didn't know if I was going to play," Rivers says of those retirement thoughts that offseason. "I mean really, physically, I was like, 'I may not even play football anymore.'"

Now, Rivers' biggest concern is the Chargers' move north from San Diego. Rivers and his large family had intended to make their post-football home in the San Diego area, he but hasn't said anything about the franchise's move hastening his retirement timeline.

Tom Brady, New England Patriots
18th NFL season Opening-day age: 40

After he went from the 199th overall pick in the 2000 NFL Draft to arguably the greatest quarterback in the history of the game, who are we to doubt that Brady can play the five or six more seasons that he thinks he can play?

"I'd like to play until my mid-40s," Brady told *Sports Illustrated*'s Peter King. "Then I'll make a decision. If I'm still feeling like I'm feeling today, who knows? Now, those things can always change. You do need long-term goals too. I know next year is not going to be my last year."

If anyone can deliver on such a plan, it's Brady. He has become fanatical about his diet, his workout regimen and his passion for the game. "Football to me is more than just a sport. It has become my life," Brady told King. "Every choice that I make ... what I have for breakfast, how I work out, all of those things. I love the game. I love playing."

Ben Roethlisberger, Pittsburgh Steelers
14th NFL season Opening-day age: 35

There's an old adage in the NFL that once you start talking about retirement, you might as well just retire. Roethlisberger opened that Pandora's box this offseason, and while his hemming and hawing hasn't reached Brett Favre-ian proportions — at least not yet — he'd better prepare himself for an annual retirement watch. Of course, not only did Favre go on to play five more seasons with the Packers after dropping his first retirement hints after a season-ending loss in the 2002 NFC Playoffs, but he also played three more NFL seasons elsewhere before finally walking away at age 41.

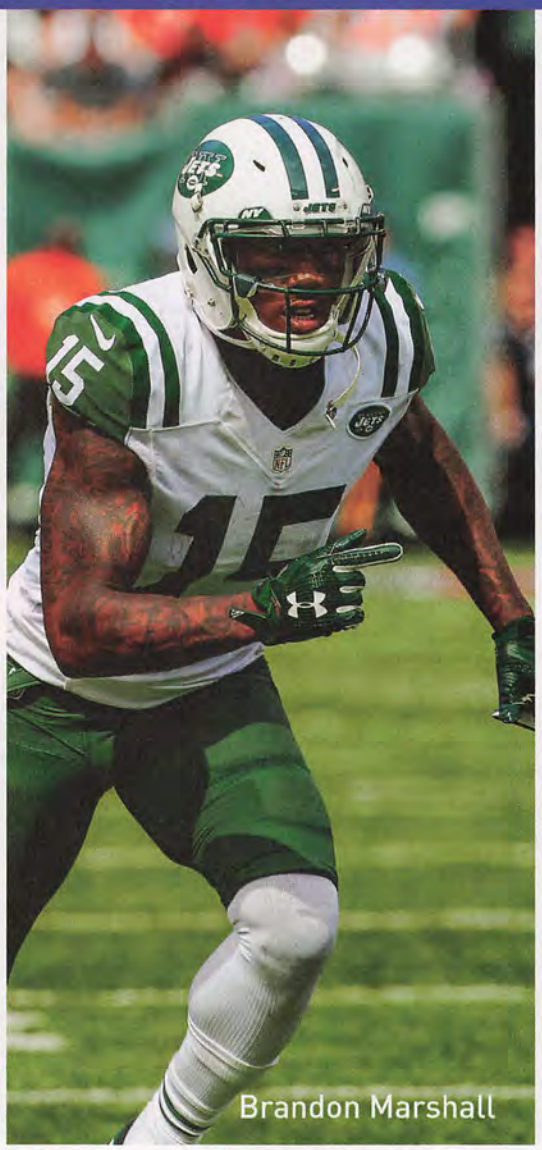
Nevertheless, Steelers coach Mike Tomlin cautioned that the team had to take its quarterback seriously after Roethlisberger said on his weekly radio spot on Pittsburgh's 93.7 The Fan that he was "going to take this offseason to evaluate, to consider all options. To consider health and family and things like that, and just kind of take some time away to evaluate next season, if there's going to be a next season."

The guess here is that Roethlisberger isn't anywhere near as close to retirement as he made it sound after the Steelers' playoff exit.

All Bello/Getty Images

Terrific Trio

Odell Beckham Jr.


Brandon Marshall

Sterling Shepard

Adding Brandon Marshall gives the Giants three potent receiving weapons for the home stretch of Eli Manning's career

BY RALPH VACCHIANO

For nearly a decade now the Giants have been talking about a "Big Three" at wide receiver. It started back when they had Plaxico Burress, Amani Toomer and a young Steve Smith early in Eli Manning's career, and continued through the Hakeem Nicks and Victor Cruz eras.

Always, it seems, they've had two stellar receivers joined by a third one filled with promise.

And year after year, it just never seemed to work out.

It didn't work out last season, either, because it was clear that after two surgeries and approaching age 30, Cruz just wasn't the receiver he once was. So the Giants revised their expectations and headed into the offseason content with their dynamic duo. They were thrilled with All-Pro Odell Beckham, obviously, and encouraged by the rookie season that Sterling Shepard had. They just weren't sure they'd be able find a good enough receiver to turn their twosome into a trio.

"And then, all of a sudden," Giants co-owner John Mara says, "he becomes available."

The gift came on March 2 when Brandon Marshall was released by the Jets, widening the eyes of the Giants' front office and springing their phones into action. In every way, Marshall was the perfect fit — an experienced veteran, skilled in handling the New York media, mature enough to mentor a young and impressionable receiving corps, and with good enough skills that as recently as two years ago (2015) he had 109 catches for 1,502 yards and 14 touchdowns.

Maybe most important, he's big — 6'4", 230, the kind of huge target that Eli Man-

Beckham: Al Bello/Getty Images; Marshall: Gary Hershorn; Shepard: Jim McIsaac/Getty Images

ning hasn't had since the 6'5" Burress was helping him win Super Bowl XLII.

"I've seen film of Eli and Plaxico, but in my mind that didn't factor into this decision," Giants coach Ben McAdoo says. "It's a different player, a different time. But there are a lot of advantages to having a bigger receiver on the outside. You can throw it up, especially with someone like Brandon with his strength and his catch radius. He almost didn't fit through my doorway when he came into the building. He's a big man. He's like a tight end body out there — a big, strong man.

"There's a lot of value in that."

That's exactly what the Giants are counting on as they head into the home stretch of Manning's career. Their franchise quarterback is 36 years old and signed for three more seasons. The Giants, coming off an 11–5 season and a return to the playoffs, with a top-10 defense and one of the most exciting receivers in the NFL (Beckham), believe they've got nearly enough talent to win at least one more Super Bowl before the Manning Era ends.

But they know something is missing — which was clear last season when what had been a top-10 offense slipped to 25th in the league and never once scored more 30 points in a single game. Some of that was the porous offensive line. Some of it was their struggling running game.

But some of it was a lack of options in the passing game. Beckham was his usual stellar self with 101 catches, 1,367 yards and 10 touchdowns. Too often, though, he was the only reliable option. Shepard was more of a possession receiver than a dynamic presence in the slot (65-683-8), and Cruz was a shell of his old self and miscast as an outside receiver. He caught just 39 passes for 586 yards and one touchdown and showed no ability to get open consistently.

Marshall, perhaps by his sheer size alone, should never have that problem.

"(Big receivers) can be open when they're not really open," Manning says. "You don't want to get into a habit — it's not a jump ball — but you can throw him open. He's been in lots of offenses and he gets open a lot of different ways. He's very disciplined in his route-running and understanding concepts. I think he'll be good for that receiver room and in our locker room, having that veteran presence."

The veteran presence is another reason why the Giants believe the 33-year-old Marshall will provide instant improvement. Beckham, still only 24 years old, has been often criticized for his immaturity, for his lack of ability to stay under control on the field, and for his propensity to let things bubble over off the field — like when he punched a hole in a wall outside the interview room in Lambeau Field after the Giants' playoff loss to the Packers.

The whole playoff experience, actually, was a textbook display of Beckham's issues at this point in his career.

He kicked off the week by joining his fellow receivers on a day-off flight to Miami where they partied on a boat and then went clubbing (documenting the whole thing on social media, of course). Midweek, while trying to downplay the boat trip, he put on a mask in the locker room during the media interview period and began doing wrestling moves and poses for the TV cameras.

Then, after a week of "look at me" histrionics, he had three huge drops in his first playoff game, including one in the end zone, and he finished with just four catches for 28 yards — all of which led to his fist going through the Lambeau wall.

A day later, Giants general manager Jerry Reese talked about how this offseason would be a good time for Beckham to "grow up."

Marshall, who had his own maturity issues early in his career, has actually spoken to Beckham at times over the last few years, offering to counsel him about the perils of handling all the attention and fame.

Being a counselor or mentor wasn't the primary reason the Giants signed Marshall. After all, as co-owner Steve Tisch says: "[Beckham's] not a problem child. He's a work in progress."

But outside of Manning, Beckham is probably the best and most important player on the Giants. So they'll do anything they can do to help him.

"We've got to remember that Odell is, what, 23, 24 years old?" Marshall says. "We all have our own journey. He's the ultimate competitor. So I want him to stay exactly where he's at.

"Sometimes it's easy for us as wide receivers and football players to cross that line, but he'll grow. The type of guy Odell is, he's a sponge. And he really wants to learn from different people and pull from different people. I'm sure that he's going to use me when he needs to, and he's going to pull from my experiences, both good and bad. I'm excited to see him take it to another level. This kid isn't even in his prime yet and he's a monster."

The Giants believe Shepard has "monster" potential too — certainly the potential to surpass the 10.5 yards per catch he averaged last season. And now, adding Marshall with his huge size, long arms and ability to provide the biggest target Manning has had in years ...

"We've got to remember that Odell is, what, 23, 24 years old? We all have our own journey. He's the ultimate competitor. So I want him to stay exactly where he's at. Sometimes it's easy for us as wide receivers and football players to cross that line, but he'll grow."

— Brandon Marshall

Once again, if everything falls into place as expected — from Beckham's maturity to Shepard's potential to the talent Marshall brings — the Giants are envisioning a three-headed monster that will be difficult for defenses to stop. After years of searching, Marshall could be the missing piece.

"I just think that there is a lot of opportunity on the other side of Odell," Marshall says. "Obviously every team tries to take out Odell. (I can) help out the offense, the quarterback, to be able to keep defensive coordinators and the opposing defense honest. I think there is a lot of opportunity to definitely produce, given that Odell is on the other side."

"(Signing Marshall) was a spark to the entire organization, getting a player of that caliber," Mara says. "I think that's really going to help us. He's got a great attitude and he wants to win and I think he'll be a good influence in the receiver room."

"He's a talented guy and I think he'll be a great leader of this team and a great playmaker, and he'll give us another weapon," Manning says. "You're always excited about that."

BY ANDY GRIBBLE

IRON MAN

*Browns tackle **Joe Thomas** has been a rock of stability for an unstable franchise*

In the midst of the final game of yet another trying, difficult season, Joe Thomas gave himself a couple of seconds to stretch his back in between plays. It was late December 2013 and, as the Browns' veteran left tackle described it, a "meaningless" game against the team's top rival, Pittsburgh, which was similarly out of the playoff picture, to cap his seventh season with the Browns. An hour or so separated Thomas from a month of R&R — "Other people call it the playoffs, but I call it the all-star break," he jokingly says — before his seventh consecutive Pro Bowl appearance.

Thomas, who was dealing with back spasms at the time, lifted his leg across the other, placing his ankle atop the opposite knee. He bent down with force, too much of it, and heard the kind of "pop" an athlete never wants to hear come from his knee.

"I knew something bad had happened," Thomas says. "I could kind of walk and it felt OK to stand on it and then I said, 'All right, I guess I'll play this play and play it like I normally do.' At that point you're probably not going to make it worse. It is what it is."

Thomas played the rest of the game, a 20–7 loss that capped Rob Chudzinski's first and only season as Browns head coach. An MRI shortly thereafter revealed that Thomas had a Grade 2 tear in his LCL, an injury that would have kept him sidelined for four to six weeks if the season had continued.

More than three years later, it's a story that Thomas relays with plenty of laughter after lunch inside the Browns facility in suburban Cleveland. Ten years and 10 Pro Bowls after his pro career began, Thomas is still a cornerstone piece of the team that drafted him. He's come close — torn LCL close — but he still hasn't missed a single snap since his NFL debut.

He'll enter his 11th season riding an NFL-best streak of 9,934 consecutive snaps with a chance to hit 10,000 in Cleveland's season opener.

"You don't let your mind tell you that you can't do that because your mind tells you a lot of times in any game, 'I can't do it anymore,'" Thomas says. "You've got to push through it and kind of block out that part of your mind that says you can't do it anymore.

"You get a lot of times when your limbs kind of go numb and they start tingling or you get a little stinger or your knee feels twisted up and messed up. You always think, 'I've got 30 seconds to make this thing feel better,' and by the time the next play starts you usually forget about it. That's kind of carried over for the rest of my career."

Thomas has literally given everything he can to the Browns and believes he has even more to give entering the second decade of his professional career. At 32, he's the oldest player on one of the NFL's youngest rosters, but he continues to play

Peter Brouillet

at a level that is envied and respected around the league. Though Thomas has been the subject of external trade rumors over the past two years, Browns coach Hue Jackson — the sixth head coach of Thomas' career — has made it clear how valued Thomas is inside the locker room, on the field and everywhere in between.

"That's not happening, or I'm going with him, OK?" Jackson said during the latter stages of Cleveland's 2016 season, a 1–15 campaign. "I guarantee you that. I'm going with him. No, Joe Thomas means too much to this organization and to this football team. As I said to everybody, I want us to do right by him. Right by that is let's go get this man some wins. He deserves that."

The closest Thomas came to the playoffs was his rookie season in 2007. The Browns posted their best record since 1994, going 10–6 on the shoulders of an unexpectedly prolific passing offense, but they came up one win short of a trip to the postseason. Since then, the Browns have averaged 4.2 wins per season.

Change has surrounded Thomas since he moved to Cleveland, but he's prided himself on being an outlier of stability. Even if the opportunity were to present itself, Thomas, a father of three and full-time Cleveland resident, couldn't envision playing anywhere else.

"I place a high value on building a champion and being a part of the process of winning a championship," Thomas says. "To me, it's all about the process, and the championship is just sort of the end of that process. I think if you just skip forward to the end, it doesn't mean as much. 'Hey, I got a Super Bowl ring, but I was there for a month or a year. I wasn't part of the building. I was just sort of a bit player at the end of it.' To me, it just wouldn't mean almost anything.

"I've always taken pride in being there when the hard work was being done. For me, that means turning this franchise that hasn't even made a playoff in 10-plus years into a champion. That would mean everything and would be so special."

Thomas has been part of several reboots in Cleveland, but he feels like the current regime — spearheaded by Jackson, executive vice president of football operations Sashi Brown and chief strategy officer Paul DePodesta — has the team on a path toward delivering the results Jackson wants for his future Hall of Fame left tackle. Thomas has been outspoken about mistakes of the past but says the current roster has "the right pieces in place," whether it be promising young players like nose tackle Danny Shelton, wide receiver Corey Coleman and defensive end Myles Garrett or draft assets shrewdly acquired in a slew of trades over the past year, to ensure he'll never again experience another season like 2016.

"Now it's just about having that patience to let the hard work and the planning and the preparation materialize for this team," Thomas says. "I think that's why I'm very optimistic about the future of the Browns."

And that's not to say he isn't enjoying the present. Even during the hard times of 2016, Thomas found joy from the endless line of young players who surrounded him inside the locker room. When the team entered its home finale staring down history with an 0–14 record, Thomas remained a calming, guiding presence. When the Browns held on for a memorable Christmas Eve victory over the Chargers, Thomas let his guard down like never before. Tears streamed down his face as the celebration swirled around him.

"I kept telling myself, 'I shouldn't be this happy. This is not that big of a deal,'" Thomas says. "We just won a game and it doesn't even matter."

But that's the thing. From the very first snap of his NFL career to No. 9,934 this past January in Pittsburgh to however many more lie ahead, Thomas doesn't take a single one for granted.

All those snaps have come at a cost. Thomas told ESPN in late April that he was already experiencing memory loss, although he accepts the physical pounding as a tolerable price to pay for playing a tough game for a high salary. "To be able to live the lifestyle and provide for my family the way that football has been able to do, to me it's a trade-off that I'm willing to accept," Thomas says.

His teammates appreciate his commitment. "He exemplifies, for me, just consistency and toughness and all the things you are looking for in a player and a teammate," former Browns quarterback Josh McCown says. "Just the fact that he has not missed a snap speaks volumes about who he is, because this game is tough. For him to do that more than anything, that is the thing I am most impressed with. It is part of his makeup off the field."

Four days into training camp last year, Thomas stayed on the field for nearly an hour after practice working alongside rookie Shon Coleman. The third-round pick from Auburn had just experienced one of his first NFL practices, and his head was spinning. Thomas hasn't felt that way in a while, but he remembers it all too well.

The scene has been a familiar one between Thomas and the team's younger players, no matter the position. Because of the ever-changing nature of the Browns' roster, Thomas became a veteran in a hurry, lending blocking tips to some, Cleveland house-hunting advice to others. Anything he could do to help, even though what he was doing from his position on the field on every snap of every season was more than sufficient.

"That's kind of been something I was born with. I like to help people, whether that's as a left tackle or a guard or off the field, it gives me satisfaction," Thomas says. "It's just kind of carried over, and as I've gotten older and understood the position more and more, it becomes even more enjoyable to me. I feel that's one of the things I can bring to this team."

Thomas isn't practicing as much as he used to — he receives days of rest in training camp and on Wednesdays throughout the season — but he's working harder than ever. He was a constant presence in the Browns' facility throughout the offseason and has embraced a number of new workout regimens, most notably yoga, to make sure the snaps he piles onto his seemingly unbelievable streak are just as impactful as the previous 9,934.

"If I can, it'd probably be a good idea to keep this thing going," Thomas says, "and not go out of the game for any hangnails."

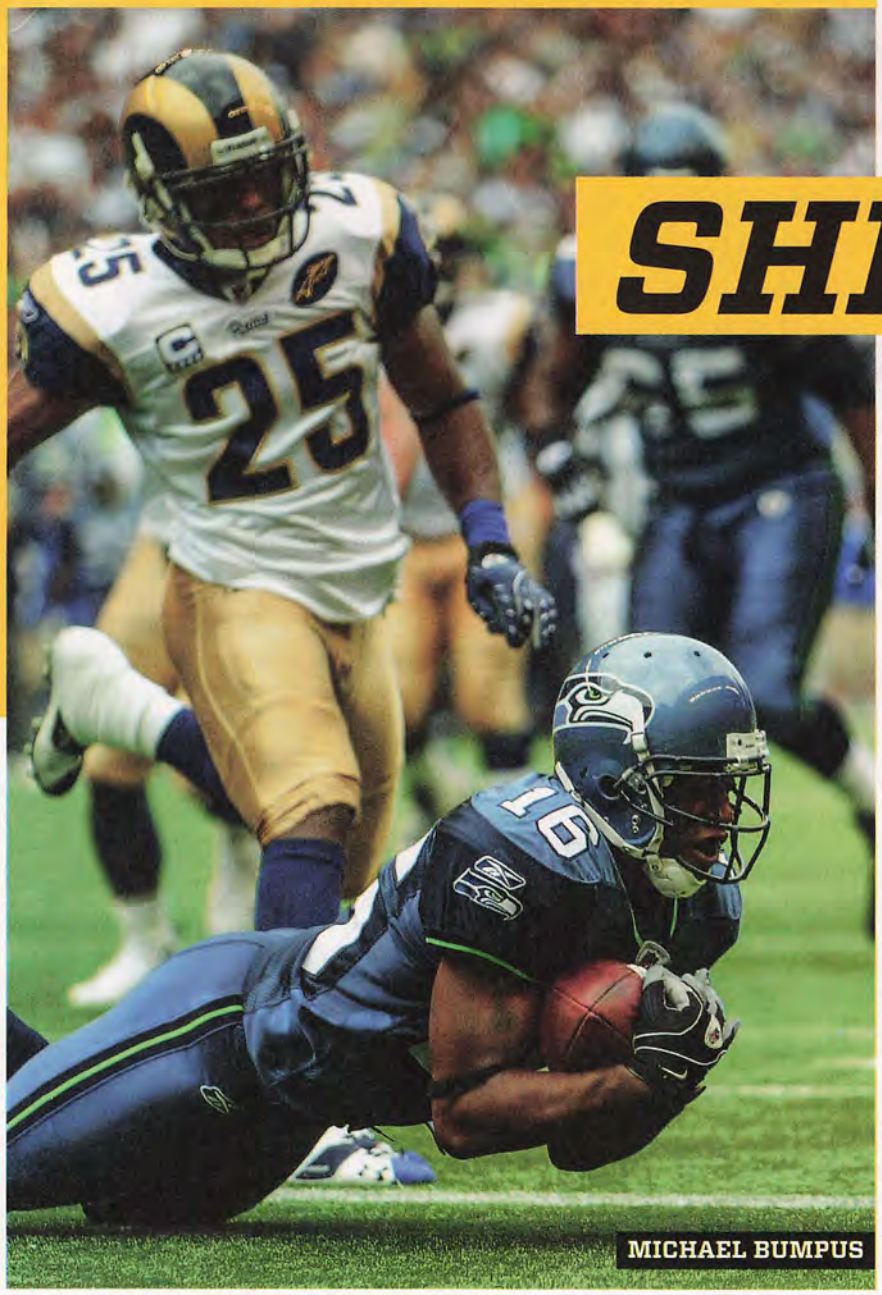
"I'VE ALWAYS TAKEN PRIDE IN BEING THERE WHEN THE HARD WORK WAS BEING DONE. FOR ME, THAT MEANS TURNING THIS FRANCHISE THAT HASN'T EVEN MADE A PLAYOFF IN 10-PLUS YEARS INTO A CHAMPION. THAT WOULD MEAN EVERYTHING AND WOULD BE SO SPECIAL."

Joe Thomas

ONE SHINING MOMENT

We've likely long since forgotten them (if we knew of them at all), but these former players will remember their solitary NFL touchdowns forever

BY MATT CROSSMAN



MICHAEL BUMPUS

Michael Bumpus, a practice squad player elevated to the Seahawks roster due to injuries, sprinted across the end zone, open, on a play he had practiced repeatedly that week with the first team. He looked to his quarterback, eyes like saucers. Matt Hasselbeck not only looked toward Bumpus, but also he made eye contact with him. Surely he was about to zing the ball to Bumpus, who would catch it for his first NFL touchdown.

It was a moment every receiver dreams about.

But Hasselbeck didn't throw the ball. He looked away to find another receiver. Bumpus kept going across the middle … was his big chance going to disappear?

As he tells the story now, Bumpus doesn't blame Hasselbeck for not throwing it. "I'm a free-agent rookie. Who the hell's this guy?" He was only on the field because the guys ahead of him had gotten hurt. So yeah, Bumpus understands: He had not yet earned Hasselbeck's trust.

But apparently the receiver Hasselbeck looked to next wasn't open, because he turned back to Bumpus and slung the ball down low between two defenders. Here came Bumpus' hero or zero moment. "It slowed down," Bumpus says. "The crowd wasn't there. It felt like I could see every little ripple on the ball. It looked like a movie. Then when you catch it, everything speeds back up."

The crowd roared its approval. As Bumpus says, "It was Seattle, so it was loud as heck." A local boy — Bumpus had attended Washington State — had made good. Nobody knew it at the time, but that was as good as it was going to get for Bumpus. It was his first, last and only touchdown in the NFL.

Modest as that stat might be, Bumpus still joined an elite, albeit surprisingly large, group. A list generated at pro-football-reference.com shows that 2,418 players have scored one, and only one, touchdown in their NFL career.

Those men made a solitary trip to the end zone and came away with a story they could tell, re-tell and tell again, to their kids, their kids' friends, their kids' friends' parents, the guy at the grocery store, random telemarketers, etc.

The men who scored these touchdowns are proud of their six-point soirees but also look back with self-deprecating humor. Their modest careers long ago sanded off whatever cocky edge they might have played with. To score one touchdown is a great honor, but it's also, in a weird way, funny. To score one is both great and irrelevant at the same time, like, "how did I end up here, in this end zone, at this moment?"

Who cares, as long as you got there. And here's how they did, as well as what happened next.

Bumpus: Otto Greule Jr/Getty Images; Duhe: AP Photo/Al Messerschmidt

Player: **Michael Bumpus, WR, Seahawks**
The play: Sept. 21, 2008, 10-yard reception from quarterback Matt Hasselbeck

"The coolest part was all the veterans came by and showed me some love," Bumpus says. "Nate Burleson, Deion Branch — the receiver corps was really veteran. For them to be just as excited as I was, was pretty cool. They took me out that night, and we had a good time."

After he caught the pass, Bumpus did a little dance he and another practice squad player had dreamed up, pointed at the camera, then returned to the sideline. As he sat talking to the receivers coach, running back Julius Jones approached him — carrying the ball. "Julius runs up and says, man, you forgot something. I stood up and gave him a hug. I can't believe I forgot that ball."

Where the ball is now: At his mom's house. He carried it around "for at least an hour" after the game and then gave it to her for safekeeping. "It's probably only moved when I touched it, in eight years," he says.

A high school football coach and trainer now, Bumpus plans to encase the ball and give it to his sons when they're older. "Every dad in my town [says], tell me about your touchdown. It's only one touchdown. They remind me, they didn't get to do that. That's something most dads in America want to experience."

A.J. DUHE

Player: **Sean Lumpkin, DB, Saints**
The play: Sept. 3, 1995, 47-yard interception return

Immediately before this play, 49ers quarterback Steve Young left the game and was replaced by Elvis Grbac. Lumpkin welcomed him by picking off a pass and returning it for the first points of New Orleans' 1995 season.

"As soon as I got it, all I saw was one person on the left side," says Lumpkin, who played at the University of Minnesota before a five-year NFL career. "I believe it was the running back, William Floyd. I remember him coming from the left side, like a flash. I stepped to the left, bypassed him, switched the ball, and then, in my mind, I'm like, I'm scoring a touchdown.

"When I was running to the left, my momentum was carrying me. I had to tiptoe so I wouldn't step out of bounds. I tiptoed down the sidelines into the end zone. I did a little tightrope act. I was looking before I spiked the ball, hoping they weren't going to call me out of bounds. Sure enough, the refs got together and called it a touchdown.

"I was really happy. I didn't know what else to do, so I just fell on my back. That was a big deal. It doesn't happen often. When you get it, you want to take it to the house. I'm not a wide receiver or a running back. They're always scoring touchdowns. You score it, enjoy the moment, cherish the moment."

Where the ball is now: Lumpkin moved back to Minnesota from New Orleans, and when he unpacked, the ball was missing. He thought the movers had stolen it. Finally, after about six months, he found it in the last box he looked in. The ball usually lives in what he calls his "Big Ten room," a pool room decorated with memorabilia from his career. Sometimes he takes it with him when he speaks to elementary schools.

Player: **Mark Arneson, LB, St. Louis Cardinals**
The play: Sept. 9, 1979, 29-yard fumble return

When Arneson picked the ball up off of the turf at Giants Stadium, he saw nothing but green between himself and the end zone. "There was nobody in front of me, so I didn't have to put any super moves on anybody or run anybody over," he says.

Arneson says he can't remember ever thinking about scoring a touchdown. And you can't blame him. He had never scored a touchdown in college, either.

When he got to the end zone, he wasn't sure what to do. "I didn't spike it. I didn't think of that. I just kind of put both arms up and made a fist. It was kind of goofy, really," Arneson says. "I hadn't practiced what my touchdown routine would be."

The touchdown alone would have made it a great day. But it also happened to be Arneson's 30th birthday. His wife had already planned a surprise party for him that night at the team hotel, and his arrival with his first and only NFL touchdown ball made the night even better.

Where the ball is now: On display in Arneson's home office, along with eight game balls he earned in his NFL career.

Player: **Kurt Knoff, DB, Vikings**
The play: Nov. 9, 1980, 67-yard interception return

Knoff had been the high school athlete of the year in Minnesota in 1972. He was a top-rated safety in college at Kansas but tore his ACL in the last game of his senior year. The Broncos drafted him anyway, and he sat out what would have been his rookie season. He eventually was healthy enough to play in parts of six seasons with two teams, including four with the hometown Vikings.

The pick came on a pass by the Lions' Gary Danielson. "It was a good read. I had had some knee issues prior to the game. The joke was afterwards, when I lumbered to the end zone and scored, people were joking about taking the piano off of my back. I wasn't exactly sprinting. I was trying to sprint, but I wasn't moving very fast."

Where the ball is now: On a shelf in the basement of his house. "I can't honestly tell you if more than one or two or three people other than my wife, kids and I have

ever seen it. We don't bring people down to the basement. I don't know if I've ever even talked about it to somebody else, as crazy as that sounds. I should probably have it up in the family room on the main level of the house, and then the few people who do come over to the house, you can say, there's the one and only touchdown I ever got. If I had to guess, I would probably say one or two or three people in my life have ever asked [if I scored.]"

Player: A.J. Duhe, LB, Dolphins
The play: Jan. 23, 1983 AFC Championship Game, 35-yard interception return

In the 118 NFL games Duhe played in beside this one, he had four interceptions. In this one — known as the Mud Bowl because the playing conditions were atrocious — he had three. On the third, as he rushed the quarterback, he diagnosed a dump-off pass to a running back who was behind him. "I jumped up as best I could in those conditions. Looking at the film, even to this day, I thought, I jumped pretty good for an old man with muddy feet on a wet surface."

He batted the ball for a second before seizing control of it. He then waltzed into the end zone.

Where the ball is now: On display at his house. Over the years he has let his kids play with some of his other NFL balls. In fact, some of them have been so used and abused that he threw them away. But not this one. "That's the only one I know its whereabouts right now," he says

He's not 100 percent sure it's the interception ball, but he knows it's from that game, at the very least. That's unmistakable. "I know it's the Mud Bowl game because it's still got a little mud in the creases. You can tell it was a ball played in those conditions."

Player: Ken Schroy, DB, Jets
The play: Nov. 23, 1980, 82-yard interception return

This could not have been a fun game for a defensive back: The Oilers had Kenny

MILT STEGALL

AP Photo/The Canadian Press, Nathan Denette

Oh, Canada

Milt Stegall scored one touchdown in his NFL career: a 12-yard reception on Oct. 11, 1992. He had four total receptions in 21 games, all for the Bengals. He had a bit more success north of the border — he scored more touchdowns than anybody in Canadian Football League history (147) and he also set the single-season mark (23, in 2002).

He looks back on his visits to the end zone in two countries.

On the NFL touchdown: I still remember it like it was yesterday. We were playing the Houston Oilers. We were getting crushed. That's why I had the opportunity to play receiver — for the most part, I just played special teams. Late in the game, they put me in. They put in Donald Hollas, who was the second- or third-string quarterback at the time. We were on the 12-yard line. He threw a quick out. I caught the ball, turned around, and there was no one there. I went in and I dove, and as I dove, two of the Oilers actually hit each other, like the Keystone Cops. It was on ESPN later on as a blooper play.

I remember the one in the NFL moreso than the majority of the ones I scored in the CFL, because it's the NFL. Let's be honest: As an American, we don't dream about playing in the CFL. I'm very fortunate that I got that opportunity. It opened up so many doors and did so many things for me and my family. But we dream about playing in the NFL. I didn't know about the CFL until I went to the CFL. I was all about the NFL. The fact I got one touchdown — that's going to be stitched in my brain until the day I die.

On the time he almost lost the ball he scored with: After my rookie year, I had to go back to Miami of Ohio for one more semester. [The ball] was in my mother's basement for a time. She was moving some stuff out of her basement because she was about to sell her house. She almost got rid of the ball. She almost gave it away.

I remember coming home and saying, let me check in the basement and see if I have any stuff down there. I had somewhat forgot about it. I was like, Oh, this ball is down here. Let me keep this ball.

On the one-touchdown fraternity: Most athletes, we're conceited. We have big egos. I thought I'd get many more chances (to score). But that was it. The fact I did get one — how many people can say they had any? The fact I had one, that's a true honor right there.

Most of us, we weren't supposed to make the NFL. Things had to work out in our favor. Don't get me wrong. We worked hard. We were great athletes. We weren't the best on the team. Out of the 53 guys, as they say, we were probably between 50 and 53. So the fact we got the opportunity to score those touchdowns? We'll take it any way we can get it. Up by 50, down by 50, somebody fumbles and we have to scoop it up and score, regardless of how it happened, we were happy to get that opportunity.

On where the ball is now: If you asked me, "OK, can you find it?" It may take me an hour or two. I know it's here in this house. But when you have kids, you start accumulating all this stuff, and toys, it would take me a couple hours to find it, but I would definitely find it. It's stashed away somewhere in this house. I know that much.

Stabler at quarterback, Dave Casper at tight end and Earl Campbell at running back, all of them Hall of Famers.

On this play, Schroy lined up opposite the tight end. "Normally I would play him tight. But I had [a] responsibility to keep everything inside. I was only off maybe five or six yards. He ran at me and ran an out. I had man-to-man on him and stayed with him."

As the ball sailed toward them, Schroy cut in front of the intended receiver and caught the ball. He returned it untouched. "Once I got it, I ran as fast as I could. Nobody could catch me."

Where the ball is now: Schroy says he kept every interception (16) and fumble recovery (11) of his career and still has "tons" of footballs in his house. "It was a big part of my life," he says. "To stick around for eight years, I think that's pretty cool."

Only three of those footballs are prominently displayed, and his touchdown ball is one of them. "Strong safeties are not supposed to be intercepting," he says. "They're supposed to be tackling and filling holes. In our scheme, we pretty much put eight in the box. It was Earl Campbell; we had to stop him. I was always up in the box helping to fill holes. That was also a thrill — that I tackled Earl Campbell."

Player: **John Dutton, DL, Cowboys**
The play: Oct. 5, 1980,
38-yard interception return

Let's let John's wife, Ginny, tell this one. She watched the game from the suite behind the end zone. Late in the game, the Cowboys were cruising to a big win. Her friends had stopped watching the game because it was almost over and not close. But Ginny kept her eyes on John. And all of a sudden, he had the ball in his hands and was headed toward the end zone — straight at her. Ginny got so excited she almost knocked over the woman next to her.

Her excitement gave way to … confusion. What was taking so long? To call John's return lumbering would probably be generous. "I just remember looking at him going, why is he going so slow?" she says now, laughing at the memory. "He told me afterward it was because he was laughing so hard that he was hunching over a little bit."

After Dutton scooped up the ball, he had to jump over the legs of Ed "Too Tall" Jones on the way to the end zone. Somewhere in there, the ridiculousness of what was happening to Dutton occurred to him. He was a defensive lineman, and an enormous one at that — he was listed at 6'6", 266 pounds but both are probably underestimations. Yet he had the ball in his hands, and he was about to score a touchdown. All of that combined cracked him up … but not so much that it kept him out of the end zone.

Where the ball is now: On display in the Duttons' home, along with two other game balls.

Player: **Mark Kafentzis, DB, Colts**
The play: Sept. 30, 1984,
59-yard interception return

Kafentzis guesses that Bills quarterback Joe Dufek didn't see him. He got a good read on the ball, jumped in front of the receiver to snag it and looked to begin his return. Kafentzis had some experience carrying the ball — he had been a running back in high school and occasionally returned punts and kicks in the NFL.

"I knew once I got past the receivers, the linemen would fall down," he says. "I just faked like I was going one way and cut back the other direction. They couldn't slow down. I think the quarterback ran by me, too. He went flying by me."

Fifty-nine yards later, Kafentzis was in the end zone. "It seemed longer at the time," he says.

Where the ball is now: "I've traveled around so much, the safest place to keep it as at my folks' house. That's why I don't have it at my house. It's been there for so long it's kind of a fixture, along with other family memorabilia from the sporting world." His brother Kurt played in two games for the Oilers, and the two of them plus three more Kafentzis brothers played college football.

Kafentzis says it's uncommon for fans to recognize him or ask him about his career, and that even when they do, it's not always about his one touchdown. He is sometimes asked about an even stranger play — when he called for a fair catch on an onside kick, which led to a free kick. "The refs didn't even know what they had to do," he says. "They had to look it up."

"All I did was raise my hands and let them know that I scored," he says. "I gave the ball back to the official and went back to the dadgum bench, and that was the end of it. In those days, they always said, you act like you've been there before. No dancing, none of that kind of crazy crap. **That's how I handled it—like I'd been there before.** No big deal. There's too much show business now when you get into the end zone."

-Joey Hackett

Player: **Joey Hackett, TE, Packers**
The play: Oct. 9, 1988,
2-yard touchdown reception

Hackett spent one year with the Broncos and two with Green Bay and had four career receptions — including his lone touchdown.

On this occasion, the Packers were in their goal-line offense with three tight ends. Quarterback Don Majkowski bootlegged from left to right. Hackett ran across the middle, and Majkowski winged the ball to him, but it was low.

He says the refs at first ruled that he had not caught the ball; they thought he had trapped it. But instant replay overturned that decision — his hand was under the ball when he caught it. That turned out to be his final catch, a fact he was unaware of until he was interviewed for this story.

Hackett was a phenomenal athlete — he attended Elon University on a baseball scholarship and twice was drafted by Major League teams. His brother, Dino, played seven seasons as a linebacker for the Chiefs and Seahawks.

When Joey played tight end for the Broncos, the two lined up against each other. Dino was six years younger, and Joey had spent their youth toughening his kid brother up. He paid for it in the NFL.

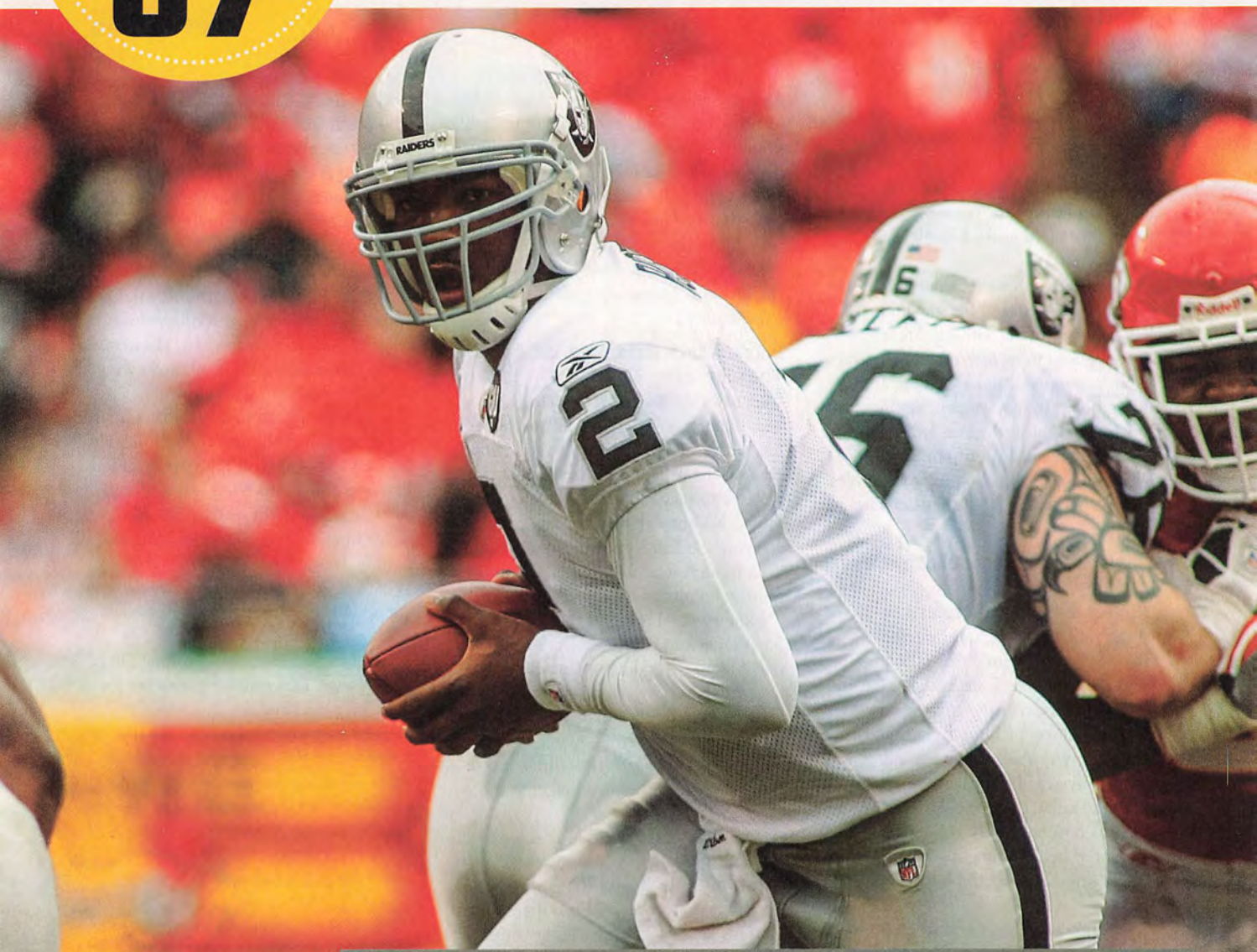
"We laid the wood on one another," he says. "We didn't take any pity on each other."

Where the ball is now: Who knows? Hackett had scored eight TDs in the USFL before joining the NFL, and keeping the ball never crossed Hackett's mind.

"All I did was raise my hands and let them know that I scored," he says. "I gave the ball back to the official and went back to the dadgum bench, and that was the end of it. In those days, they always said, you act like you've been there before. No dancing, none of that kind of crazy crap. That's how I handled it — like I'd been there before. No big deal. There's too much show business now when you get into the end zone."

2007 DRAFT REVISITED

BY JOHN GWOREK



1. OAKLAND: JAMARCUS RUSSELL, QB, LSU

OAKLAND (2007-09)
ALL-PRO SEASONS: NONE

The story goes that the Raiders fell in love with Russell's size and arm and ignored obvious red flags. While there is some truth in that, Russell was not just a workout wonder. He improved in each of his three seasons at LSU, and his final season was outstanding (67.8 completion percentage, 28 TDs, eight INTs). Russell's problems began when he held out and didn't sign with Oakland until Sept. 12, 2007, missing all of training camp and preseason. He appeared in only four games and started the season finale. That set him up to be the starter in 2008, but he went 5-10 in 15 starts and completed just 53.8 percent of his passes. The Raiders as a whole were a mess — head coach Lane Kiffin was replaced by Tom Cable after a 1-3 start — but Russell's work ethic was reportedly a huge problem, and he showed no signs of being a franchise quarterback who could lead the way to fixing things. Things only got worse in 2009 as Russell lasted just nine games as the starter, going 2-7. He finished the season last in the NFL among qualifying quarterbacks in passer rating (50.0) and completion percentage (48.8). He was released the following May after he allegedly reported to minicamp at nearly 300 pounds, and he never played in the NFL again.

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2. DETROIT: CALVIN JOHNSON, WR, GEORGIA TECH

Detroit (2007-15)
All-Pro Seasons: 2011, '12, '13

Critics snickered at the Lions taking another receiver early in the draft after having mixed success at best on first-round pass catchers in three of the previous four drafts. But they got it right with Johnson, who racked up seven 1,000-yard seasons during his nine-year career. He set an NFL record with 1,964 receiving yards in 2012, when he led the NFL with 122 catches. He also led the league in receiving yards in 2011 with 1,681. Johnson missed only nine games in his career and was a three-time All-Pro and six-time Pro Bowl selection, but his physical style took a toll. After battling injuries almost every season, he retired at 30 despite having caught 88 passes for 1,214 yards and nine scores in 2015. He played in only two playoff games in his career, yet he caught 17 passes for 296 yards in those games.

3. CLEVELAND: JOE THOMAS, OT, WISCONSIN

Cleveland (2007-present)
All-Pro Seasons: 2009, '10, '11, '13, '14, '15

The Browns seem to be always rebuilding, but they are doing it on the cornerstone that is Joe Thomas. If he played on a good team, Thomas might be in the discussion for the best offensive tackle ever. He has made the Pro Bowl in each of his first 10 seasons in the NFL; only four others — Merlin Olsen (14), Mel Renfro (10), Barry Sanders (10) and Lawrence Taylor (10) — have done that. Thomas has been named All-Pro six times despite never having played on a playoff team. And this is the kicker: Thomas has never missed a snap. Since starting the 2007 opener, Thomas has started all 60 games and played in all 9,934 offensive snaps during those games.

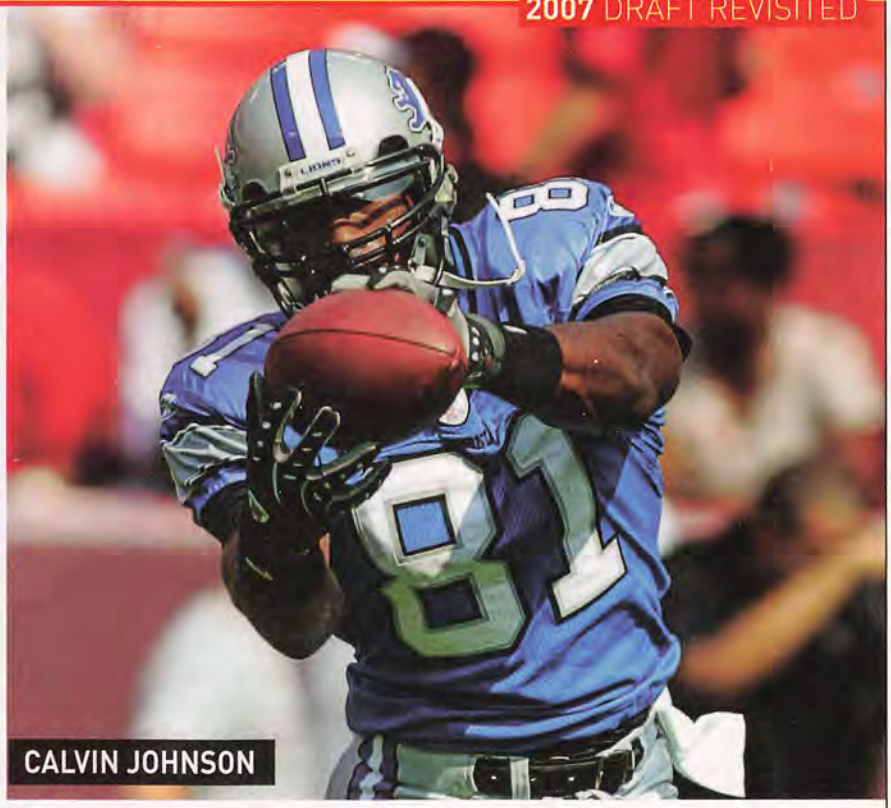
4. TAMPA BAY: GAINES ADAMS, DE, CLEMSON

Tampa Bay (2007-09), Chicago (2009)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Adams had a decent rookie season as he started eight games and recorded 6.0 sacks in the regular season and added another sack in a playoff loss. But after a sophomore season that saw only 6.5 sacks in 16 starts, Adams fell out of favor in Tampa Bay. After picking up just one sack in the first five games of 2009, Adams was traded to Chicago for a second-round pick. In 10 games with the Bears, Adams recorded just seven tackles and no sacks. He died of cardiac arrest on Jan. 17, 2010, in his hometown of Greenwood, S.C.

5. ARIZONA: LEVI BROWN, OT, PENN STATE

Arizona (2007-13), Pittsburgh (2013)
All-Pro Seasons: None



CALVIN JOHNSON

At No. 5 overall, Brown remains the highest selection from Penn State since Courtney Brown and LaVar Arrington went Nos. 1 and 2 in 2000. He didn't exactly live up to his top-five pedigree, but he carved out a solid career for the Cardinals. In seven seasons, Brown played in 81 games and started 79 at tackle. He was traded to Pittsburgh for a conditional draft choice four games into the 2013 season. But Brown suffered a freak triceps injury during pregame warm-ups before ever playing a snap for the Steelers and was placed on injured reserve. Pittsburgh gave up nothing in the trade as Brown had to be on the active roster for five weeks for there to be any return for Arizona, and he never played again.

6. WASHINGTON: LARON LANDRY, DB, LSU

Washington (2007-11), N.Y. Jets (2012), Indianapolis (2013-14)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Landry started every game for nearly all of his first three seasons with Washington, missing only the 2009 season finale. But over the next two seasons, Landry played just 17 of 32 games. He signed with the New York Jets for the 2012 season, and he made his only Pro Bowl after racking up a career-best 100 tackles with two interceptions. He signed a four-year contract with Indianapolis before the 2013 season, but his tenure with the Colts ended in February 2015. On November 2015, Landry was suspended for testing positive for PEDs as a free agent, his third violation of the league's performance-enhancing drug policy. He will be eligible for reinstatement in September.

7. MINNESOTA: ADRIAN PETERSON, RB, OKLAHOMA

Minnesota (2007-16), New Orleans (2017)
All-Pro Seasons: 2008, '09, '12, '15

Peterson has more than lived up to his lofty draft position — when he's been able to stay on the field. He has led the NFL in rushing three times and scored at least 10 touchdowns in every season in which he has played 12 or more games. But he's played in all 16 games just four times in 10 seasons. Peterson was suspended for the final 15 games of the 2014 season after being indicted on child abuse charges. He returned to lead the NFL in carries, rushing yards and rushing touchdowns in 2015. Peterson appeared in just three games in 2016 due to knee injuries but is expected to be healthy for 2017. While he may be past his prime at 32 when next season starts, his résumé is impressive. In addition to the rushing titles, four All-Pro seasons and NFL MVP award in 2012, Peterson has been to seven Pro Bowls and holds the NFL record for rushing yards in a game with 296. After signing with New Orleans in the offseason, Peterson will not be the lead back for the first time in his career.

8. ATLANTA: JAMAAL ANDERSON, DE, ARKANSAS

Atlanta (2007-10), Indianapolis (2011), Cincinnati (2012)
All-Pro Seasons: None

The Falcons had great luck in drafting future Pro Bowl back Jamal Anderson in the seventh round in 1994, but they were not as fortunate with Jamaal Anderson. Despite

starting all 16 games as a rookie, Anderson failed to record a sack. After picking up just 4.5 sacks over the next three seasons, Anderson was released during training camp in 2011. After picking up 3.0 sacks in 2011 with the Colts, Anderson was released again and signed with Cincinnati. He played in just two games with the Bengals in 2012 before being released, and his career ended when he was cut before the 2013 season by the Bears.

9. MIAMI: TED GINN JR., WR, OHIO STATE

Miami (2007-09), San Francisco (2010-12), Carolina (2013), Arizona (2014), Carolina (2015-16), New Orleans (2017)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Ginn has never made a Pro Bowl and bounced around the NFL a bit, but he is still a productive receiver and a dangerous return man. After catching 128 passes for 1,664 yards and returning three kicks for scores in three seasons with the Dolphins, Ginn moved on to San Francisco. He started just three games in three seasons for the 49ers, but he returned three more kicks for touchdowns and helped them to Super Bowl XLVII. Ginn played 2013 in Carolina and 2014 in Arizona before returning to the Panthers in 2015. In the last two seasons, Ginn has caught 98 passes for 1,491 yards and 14 touchdowns. He rushed for a touchdown in the 2015 NFC title game and caught four passes for 74 yards in Super Bowl 50. He signed with the Saints in the offseason.

10. HOUSTON: AMOBI OKOYE, DT, LOUISVILLE

Houston (2007-10), Chicago (2011-12)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Okoye was the youngest player in the NFL in 2007 at age 20, but he managed 5.5 sacks in 14 starts for the Texans. Despite starting 44 of 48 games over the next three seasons, he added just 5.5 more sacks total and moved on to the Bears in 2011. He appeared in 25 games, starting just one, and added five more sacks in Chicago over the next two seasons. In 2013 he contracted an autoimmune syndrome called anti-NMDA receptor encephalitis, causing seizures and leaving Okoye unable to speak or walk. He spent three months in a coma, lost 80 pounds, and he has a 145-day memory gap from his time fighting the illness. He attempted a comeback before the 2016 season, but no team signed him.

11. SAN FRANCISCO: PATRICK WILLIS, LB, OLE MISS

San Francisco (2007-14)
All-Pro Seasons: 2007, '09, '10, '11, '12

Willis lived up to the hype of winning both the Dick Butkus and Jack Lambert Awards as the best linebacker in college football. Much like No. 2 pick Calvin Johnson, Willis was perhaps the best player in the NFL at his position before retiring relatively early at age 30. As a rookie, Willis led the NFL in tackles and earned the first of five career All-Pro selections and the first of seven consecutive Pro Bowl trips. He recorded at least 97 tackles and made the Pro Bowl in every season in which he was able to play at least 13 games. But after battling a torn hamstring in 2011 and a broken hand in 2013, Willis was struggling with a toe injury in his eighth season. He played just six games in 2014 before deciding to have season-ending surgery and going on injured reserve. He never played again, announcing his retirement in March 2015.

TED GINN JR.

12. BUFFALO: MARSHAWN LYNCH, RB, CAL

Buffalo (2007-10), Seattle (2010-15), Oakland (2017)
All-Pro Seasons: 2012

Drafted by the Bills to replace Willis McGahee, Lynch started strong in Buffalo. In 28 games in his first two seasons, Lynch produced back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons and scored 16 total touchdowns. Then things unraveled: Lynch was suspended for the Bills' first three games in 2009 for violations of the NFL's personal conduct policy, and he never regained his status as Buffalo's go-to back. In October 2010, Lynch was traded to Seattle and found new life. He made four straight Pro Bowls from 2011-14, averaging more than 1,300 yards rushing over that span. He also scored 56 touchdowns in those four seasons, leading the NFL in rushing scores in 2013 and in rushing scores and total touchdowns in 2014. He had six career postseason 100-yard games and scored nine postseason touchdowns in 11 games. He rushed for 288 yards and four touchdowns in the 2013 postseason as the Seahawks won Super Bowl XVIII. After an injury-plagued 2015 that saw him play just seven games, Lynch retired at age 29 but is attempting a comeback with the Raiders this season.

13. ST. LOUIS: ADAM CARRIKER, DE, NEBRASKA

St. Louis (2007-08), Washington (2010-12)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Like the other defensive ends taken before him in this draft, Carriker fizzled in the NFL. He started all 16 games as a rookie for the Rams and recorded 2.0 sacks, but he started just nine games in 2008 and failed to track down an opposing passer. Carriker was traded to the Redskins two days before the 2010 draft, and the trade showed how much his star had faded: The Rams sent Carriker to Washington along with a fifth-round choice and a seventh-round choice, and all they got in return was a higher fifth-rounder and a seventh-round pick. In other words, two years after drafting Carriker in the first round, the Rams traded him just to move up 28 spots in the fifth round. Carriker started all but one game for the Redskins in 2010-11, picking up 7.0 total sacks, before tearing a quad tendon in his right leg two games into the 2012 season. He never played again.

14. N.Y. JETS: DARRELLE REVIS, DB, PITTSBURGH

N.Y. Jets (2007-12), Tampa Bay (2013), New England (2014), N.Y. Jets (2015-16)
All-Pro Seasons: 2009, '10, '11, '14

Revis started all 16 games as a rookie and then reeled off four straight Pro Bowl seasons from 2008-11, including All-Pro honors for the last three. In those first five seasons of his career, Revis intercepted 18 passes and returned three for touchdowns, establishing himself as perhaps the best corner in the game. But in his second game of 2012, he tore an ACL and missed the rest of the season. Four days before the 2013 Draft, Revis was traded to Tampa Bay for first- and fourth-round picks. He signed a $96 million contract with the Bucs, making him the highest-paid defensive back in NFL history, but none of the money was guaranteed. That allowed Tampa Bay to cut him after he had trouble fitting in with the Bucs' zone-heavy system. He signed a one-year deal with the

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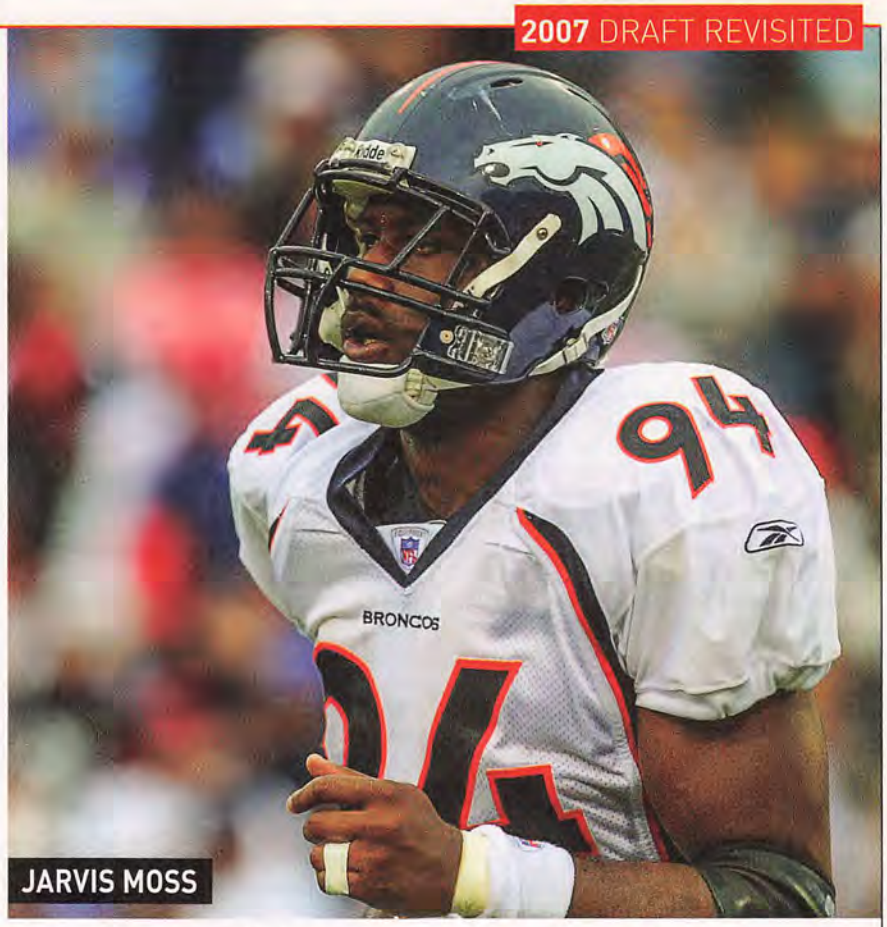
Patriots and was again named first-team All-Pro in 2014 as New England won Super Bowl XLIX. Revis returned to the Jets before the 2015 season and intercepted six passes while starting 29 games over two seasons before the Jets released him in the offseason. Revis may move to safety to prolong his career, but at his peak he was among the best corners ever to play the game.

15. PITTSBURGH: LAWRENCE TIMMONS, LB, FLORIDA STATE

Pittsburgh (2007-16), Miami (2017)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Timmons was expected to become the Steelers' next great pass-rushing linebacker. Instead, James Harrison came out of nowhere at age 29 in 2007 to have five straight Pro Bowl seasons. That limited Timmons to only two starts and 5.0 total sacks in his first two seasons. But in 2009, the Steelers moved Timmons inside, and he has found a home. He has started every game for the last six seasons and made the Pro Bowl after the 2014 season. While he hasn't been a dominant player, Timmons has been a solid contributor since moving into the starting lineup with 35.5 sacks, 12 interceptions, seven fumble recoveries and six seasons of more than 100 tackles in his career. His contract expired at the end of the 2016 season and he signed with the Dolphins.



JARVIS MOSS

16. GREEN BAY: JUSTIN HARRELL, DT, TENNESSEE

Green Bay (2007-10)
All-Pro Seasons: None

It hadn't been a good draft for defensive linemen to this point, and Harrell turned out to be the worst of the bunch. Thanks to various injuries at Tennessee, Harrell was limited to 25 collegiate starts and missed all but three games of his final season with a ruptured left biceps tendon. Despite the health concerns, the Packers saw him as a run-stuffing force for the middle of their defense. But Harrell showed up out of shape and didn't get on the field until Week 5 of his rookie season. He started two games and totaled 16 tackles. In 2008, a back injury kept him off the field until November, and he managed just 12 tackles. He reinjured his back during 2009 training camp and missed the entire season, then tore an ACL in the 2010 season opener and never played another down. In 14 total NFL games, Harrell never recorded a single sack.

17. DENVER: JARVIS MOSS, DE, FLORIDA

Denver (2007-10), Oakland (2010-11)
All-Pro Seasons: None

The Broncos traded up four spots to grab Moss, but his career went about as well as the other defensive linemen taken before him in this draft. His rookie season was cut short by a broken shin after just six games, and he struggled through two more seasons after that as the Broncos toyed with moving him to outside linebacker. They gave up on that experiment in November 2010 when they released Moss, and he signed with the Raiders. He played well enough in a reserve role to earn another one-year deal with Oakland for 2011. But after starting just one of 14 games that season, Moss was not re-signed, and he never played again in the NFL. All told, he started two NFL games and finished his career with 6.0 sacks in 53 games.

18. CINCINNATI: LEON HALL, DB, MICHIGAN

Cincinnati (2007-15), N.Y. Giants (2016)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Hall started 10 games as a rookie and led the Bengals with five interceptions. He started every game from 2008-10, picking up 13 more interceptions and teaming with Johnathan Joseph to give the Bengals one of the NFL's top cornerback tandems. He signed a four-year extension before the 2011 season and was having another solid season when he tore his left Achilles tendon in Week 9, ending his season. He returned to start 14 games in 2012 and five more in 2013 before another Achilles injury, this one on his right leg, ended his season. Remarkably, Hall again returned and started 19 games over the next two seasons for the Bengals. He was signed by the Giants before the 2016 season and played in 12 games, starting two, and picking up his first two career sacks. He has 27 career interceptions.

19. TENNESSEE: MICHAEL GRIFFIN, DB, TEXAS

Tennessee (2007-15), Carolina (2016)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Griffin was a second-team All-American as a safety at Texas, but he was forced to start his rookie season at cornerback after Adam Jones was suspended for the season. The move didn't last long, and Griffin ended up with three interceptions and 54 tackles after moving back to safety. For the next eight seasons, Griffin was a fixture at safety for the Titans. He racked up a career-best seven interceptions and made his first Pro Bowl in 2008 and added another Pro Bowl season in 2010. In nine seasons as a starter in Tennessee, Griffin played in 141 of a possible 144 games and finished his Titans career with 25 interceptions, six fumble recoveries and seven sacks. He signed with Minnesota in March 2016, but he was released off the Vikings injured reserve list in September. He signed with Carolina and played in 13 games with six starts. For the first time in his career, he failed to intercept a pass and totaled 35 tackles.

20. N.Y. GIANTS: AARON ROSS, DB, TEXAS

N.Y. Giants (2007-11), Jacksonville (2012), N.Y. Giants (2013)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Taken one pick after his Texas teammate Griffin, Ross appeared on his way to a solid career with the Giants after two seasons.

He started nine games as a rookie as the Giants won the Super Bowl and 15 more in 2008, picking up three interceptions in each season. But hamstring injuries limited him to one start in four appearances in 2009, and he started just one game among 15 appearances in 2010. An injury to Terrell Thomas opened up a starting spot for 2011, and Ross stepped up with four interceptions to help the Giants to a second Super Bowl win during his tenure. Ross signed with Jacksonville for the 2012 season, but injuries limited him to nine starts, and he failed to intercept a pass on a 2–14 team. He was released and rejoined the Giants for 2013, but he injured his back after four games and missed the rest of the season. He signed with Baltimore in 2014 but tore an Achilles tendon in training camp, ending his Ravens career before it began. He signed with Cleveland during training camp in 2015 but was released after two weeks.

21. JACKSONVILLE: REGGIE NELSON, DB, FLORIDA

Jacksonville (2007-09), Cincinnati (2010-15), Oakland (2016-present)
All-Pro Seasons: None

The Jaguars were thrilled to move down four spots in the trade with Denver and still get Nelson, who starred not far from Jacksonville as a Florida Gator. Nelson had a strong start to his career, starting 15 games as a rookie and picking off five passes. But after two more seasons with just two total interceptions, Nelson was traded to Cincinnati right before the 2010 season. He enjoyed six strong seasons with the Bengals, picking off 23 passes and making his first Pro Bowl in 2015 after leading the NFL with a career-high eight interceptions. Nelson signed with Oakland for 2016 and went back to the Pro Bowl after recording five interceptions and helping the Raiders return to the playoffs for the first time since 2002. He has one more season remaining on his contract with Oakland.

22. CLEVELAND: BRADY QUINN, QB, NOTRE DAME

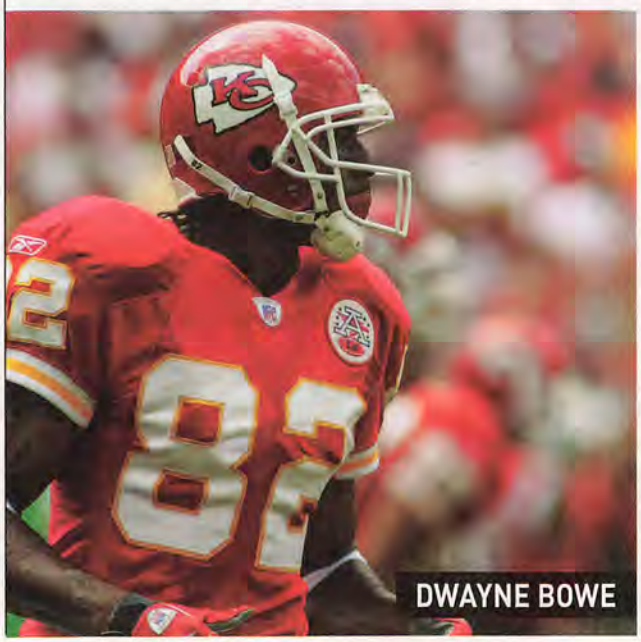
Cleveland (2007-09), Denver (2010-11), Kansas City (2012)
All-Pro Seasons: None

The Browns did everything right picking Joe Thomas at the top of this draft, but they did everything wrong here. Taking Quinn would have been bad enough, but Cleveland sent the Cowboys their first-round pick in 2008 and the No. 36 pick to move up and grab him. After seeing action in just one game as a rookie, Quinn started three games in 2008, going 1–2 while completing just 50.6 percent of his passes. He got better in 10 2009 appearances, hitting 53.1 percent and throwing more touchdowns (eight) than interceptions (seven), but the Browns went 2–7 in his nine starts. Quinn was traded to Denver in March 2010 in exchange for Peyton Hillis and two late draft picks, but he never played a down in two seasons with the Broncos. He signed with Kansas City before the 2012 season to back up Matt Cassel and ended up starting eight games. But the Chiefs went 1–7 in those games, and Quinn finished the season with just two touchdown passes and eight interceptions. He was never again active for a game in the NFL despite short stints with the Seahawks, Jets, Rams and Dolphins.

23. KANSAS CITY: DWAYNE BOWE, WR, LSU

Kansas City (2007-14), Cleveland (2015)
All-Pro Seasons: None

The third of six receivers taken in the 2007 first round, Bowe turned out to be good value this late in the round. He started all but one game in his first two seasons, averaging 78 catches for 1,008 yards and six scores in 2007-08. After injuries and a four-game PED suspension limited him to nine starts in 2009, Bowe made the Pro Bowl in 2010 thanks to 72 catches for 1,162 yards and an NFL-best 15 touchdowns. He followed that up with 81 grabs for 1,159 yards and five scores in 2011 before nagging injuries put a dent in his numbers going forward. He never again played a full season for the Chiefs, averaging fewer than 60 catches for less than 750 yards per season from 2012-14. He did, however, have a monster playoff game during that decline, grabbing eight passes for 150 yards and a touchdown in a 45–44 Wild Card loss to Indianapolis in 2013. Bowe signed a two-year deal with the Browns in 2015, but he appeared in just seven games, catching five passes for 53 yards. He was released in March 2016.


DWAYNE BOWE

24. NEW ENGLAND: BRANDON MERIWEATHER, DB, MIAMI (FLA.)

New England (2007-10), Chicago (2011), Washington (2012-14), N.Y. Giants (2015)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Meriweather was drafted using the pick the Patriots acquired from Seattle for Deion Branch. After not starting a game and playing sparingly as a rookie, Meriweather played in every game from 2008-10 for New England, starting 40 of 48 games. He recorded 12 interceptions and became a feared if reckless hitter as the Pats' main strong safety. As often happens with expensive veterans in New England, Meriweather was cut right before the 2011 season, and he signed with Chicago. He made headlines with the Bears for the wrong reasons, earning fines for helmet-to-helmet hits twice in his first five games in Chicago. After starting just four games in 2011, Meriweather signed with Washington for 2012. Two knee injuries limited him to one game that season, but he would start 23 games in 2013-14 for the Redskins, recording two interceptions and four sacks. He was also fined twice and suspended twice during that time for continued helmet-to-helmet hits. He played in 2015 for the New York Giants, starting 12 games and intercepting two passes while managing to avoid additional fines or suspensions.

25. CAROLINA: JON BEASON, LB, MIAMI (FLA.)

Carolina (2007-2013), N.Y. Giants (2013-15)
All-Pro Seasons: 2008

Beason saw a promising career cut short by injury. He never missed a start during his first four seasons, averaging 135 tackles with eight interceptions and four sacks from 2007-10. He made three straight Pro Bowls starting in 2008, when he was also a first-team All-Pro. In July 2011, Beason signed a long-term deal with Carolina that guaranteed him $25 million. But he tore his left Achilles tendon in the season opener and was never really the same. After missing the rest of the 2011 season, he played just four games in 2012 as Luke Kuechly took over as the leader of the Panthers defense. He played three games in 2013 before being traded to the Giants for a seventh-round pick. He started 11 games for New York and racked up more than 90 tackles, earning a new contract. But injury hit again as he tore a ligament and broke a bone in his toe during June workouts. He played just nine more games over the next two seasons, forced into retirement by new knee and ankle injuries after the 2015 season.

Athlon Archives

26. DALLAS: ANTHONY SPENCER, DE, PURDUE

Dallas (2007-14)
All-Pro Seasons: None

After dealing away their first-round pick to Cleveland, the Cowboys traded back up into the first round with Philadelphia to grab Spencer. Dallas hoped Spencer could spark its pass rush after a big senior season (10.5 sacks, 26.5 tackles for a loss) at Purdue. It didn't happen, at least not right away. Spencer started just six games over his first two seasons, and he never had more than six sacks in a season over the next three despite playing every game. Then, out of nowhere, Spencer made the Pro Bowl in 2012 after racking up career highs with 11 sacks and 95 tackles in 14 games. But he missed all but one game in 2013 and needed microfracture surgery on his left knee. He returned in 2014 after missing the season's first three games, but he never started a game and finished the season with a half sack and 27 tackles. He signed with New Orleans for 2015 but played in just one preseason game before ending up on injured reserve and being released in October. Spencer's 33.0 career sacks stand as the most by a defensive lineman taken in the 2007 first round.

27. NEW ORLEANS: ROBERT MEACHEM, WR, TENNESSEE

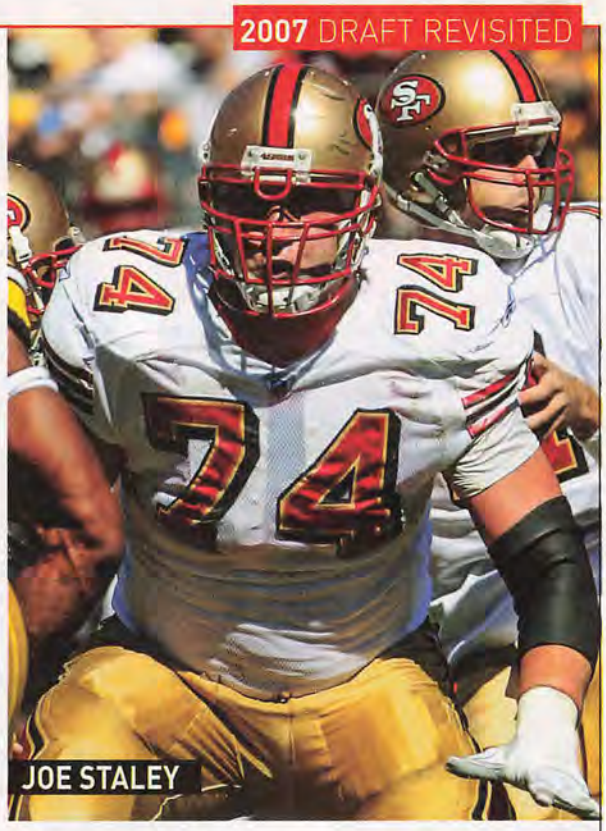
New Orleans (2007-11), San Diego (2012), New Orleans (2013-14)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Meachem had a monster final season at Tennessee with 71 catches for a school single-season record 1,298 yards and 11 touchdowns. He was a good risk for the Saints, who were looking for another speedy target for Drew Brees. Meachem missed 2007 with a knee injury and caught just 12 passes in 2008, but three went for scores and he averaged 24.1 yards on the dozen grabs. He spent the next three seasons as a part-time starter, playing in every game and starting 22 of them. Meachem was solid if not spectacular over that time, averaging 43 catches for 660 yards per season with 20 total touchdowns. He moved on to San Diego, but he was a disappointment and returned to New Orleans in 2013. He never clicked again with Brees, and he was out of the league after the 2014 season.

28. SAN FRANCISCO: JOE STALEY, OT, CENTRAL MICHIGAN

San Francisco (2007-present)
All-Pro Seasons: None

After two offensive tackles went off the board in the top five, none were taken though pick No. 27. So the 49ers traded a fourth-round pick in this draft and their first pick in 2008 to New England to jump up and grab Staley at No. 28. Staley was solid if not spectacular early in his career, starting every game in 2007 and '08 before missing seven games in both 2009 and '10. Then Jim Harbaugh arrived as coach in San Francisco, and Staley's career took off. Staley never missed a start over the next five seasons and made the Pro Bowl every year through 2015. He missed three games in December 2016 with a hamstring injury but returned for the season finale and is signed through 2019.


JOE STALEY

29. BALTIMORE: BEN GRUBBS, OG, AUBURN

Baltimore (2007-11), New Orleans (2012-14), Kansas City (2015)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Grubbs started the final 38 games of his collegiate career at Auburn, and that durability became a trademark during most of his NFL career as well. After playing in every game over his first four seasons for the Ravens, Grubbs missed six games in 2011 but was elected to his first Pro Bowl. After signing as a free agent with New Orleans in 2012, Grubbs started every game for the Saints for the next three seasons and made another Pro Bowl in 2013. Grubbs was traded to the Chiefs in March 2015 for a fifth-round pick in the 2015 Draft. He started seven games for the Chiefs before injuring his neck and going on injured reserve in December. He was released after the season and was forced to retire as the injury did not improve despite months of rehab.

30. SAN DIEGO: CRAIG DAVIS, WR, LSU

San Diego (2007-10)
All-Pro Seasons: None

Davis was seen as a bit of a reach at the time, especially given that he was LSU's No. 2 option in the passing game after Dwayne Bowe, who was taken seven picks earlier. Davis caught just 20 passes as a rookie, averaging less than 10 yards per reception in 13 games. But that was a monster season compared to his next two. He played in just five games in 2008 and '09 combined, catching just 10 passes. He was better in 2010 (21 catches for 259 yards in just seven games), but he was released by San Diego after the season. He signed with Buffalo during training camp but failed to make the opening-day roster.

31. CHICAGO: GREG OLSEN, TE, MIAMI (FLA.)

Chicago (2007-10), Carolina (2011-present)
All-Pro Seasons: None

The first tight end off the board, Olsen got off to a rocky start when a preseason knee injury kept him out of the Bears' first two games in 2007; he hasn't missed a game since. Olsen's numbers were trending upward for his first three seasons as his reception total went from 39 to 54 to 60. But after he caught just 41 passes in 2010, he was traded to Carolina for a third-round pick before the 2011 season. Olsen caught just 45 passes that season, but his yards per catch went up to 12.0 for the first time in his career, and it was a sign of things to come. Over the last five seasons, Olsen has become an elite weapon, averaging 77 catches for 969 yards. In 2016, he became the first tight end in NFL history with three consecutive 1,000-yard seasons and was named to his third straight Pro Bowl. He is signed through 2018.

32. INDIANAPOLIS: ANTHONY GONZALEZ, WR, OHIO STATE

Indianapolis (2007-11)
All-Pro Seasons: None

The Colts were looking for a slot receiver to work inside of Reggie Wayne and Marvin Harrison. And for two seasons, Gonzalez played his role well. After catching 37 passes for 576 yards and three scores in 13 games as a rookie, Gonzalez played in all 16 games in 2008, grabbing 57 balls for 664 yards and four touchdowns. He earned a starting spot opposite Wayne when Harrison was released in 2009, but he injured his right knee in the season opener and missed the rest of the season. He played in only two games in 2010, catching five passes, before injuring his other knee, and he failed to catch a pass in 2011 despite appearing in eight games. He signed with New England in March 2012, but he was released in May and never played again.

2017 **DRAFT** RECAP

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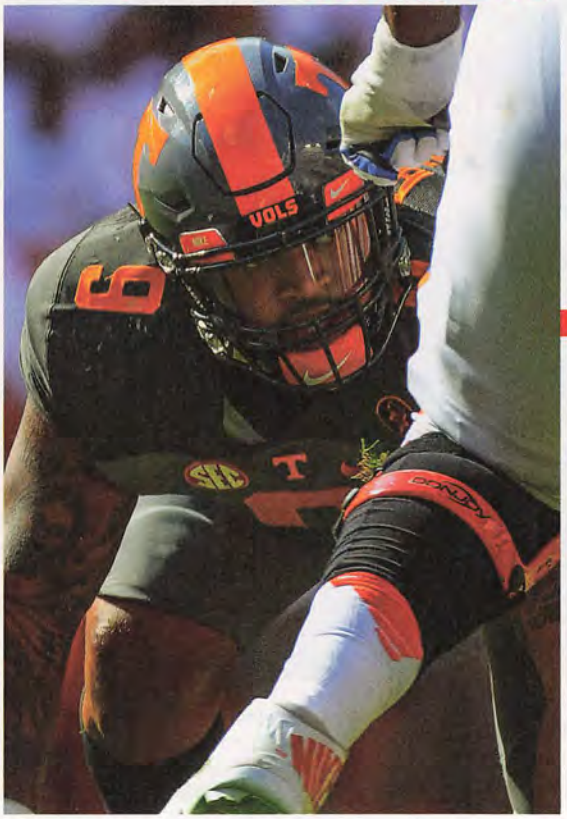
ROUND ONE



1.	Browns	Myles Garrett	DE	Texas A&M
2.	Bears	Mitchell Trubisky	QB	North Carolina
3.	49ers	Solomon Thomas	DE	Stanford
4.	Jaguars	Leonard Fournette	RB	LSU
5.	Titans	Corey Davis	WR	Western Michigan
6.	Jets	Jamal Adams	S	LSU
7.	Chargers	Mike Williams	WR	Clemson
8.	Panthers	Christian McCaffrey	RB	Stanford
9.	Bengals	John Ross	WR	Washington
10.	Chiefs	Patrick Mahomes II	QB	Texas Tech
11.	Saints	Marshon Lattimore	CB	Ohio State
12.	Texans	Deshaun Watson	QB	Clemson
13.	Cardinals	Haason Reddick	OLB	Temple
14.	Eagles	Derek Barnett	DE	Tennessee
15.	Colts	Malik Hooker	S	Ohio State
16.	Ravens	Marlon Humphrey	CB	Alabama
17.	Redskins	Jonathan Allen	DE	Alabama
18.	Titans	Adoree' Jackson	CB	USC
19.	Buccaneers	O.J. Howard	TE	Alabama
20.	Broncos	Garett Bolles	OT	Utah
21.	Lions	Jarrad Davis	ILB	Florida
22.	Dolphins	Charles Harris	OLB	Missouri
23.	Giants	Evan Engram	TE	Ole Miss
24.	Raiders	Gareon Conley	CB	Ohio State
25.	Browns	Jabrill Peppers	S	Michigan
26.	Falcons	Takkarist McKinley	DE	UCLA
27.	Bills	Tre'Davious White	CB	LSU
28.	Cowboys	Taco Charlton	DE	Michigan
29.	Browns	David Njoku	TE	Miami
30.	Steelers	T.J. Watt	OLB	Wisconsin
31.	49ers	Reuben Foster	ILB	Alabama
32.	Saints	Ryan Ramczyk	OT	Wisconsin

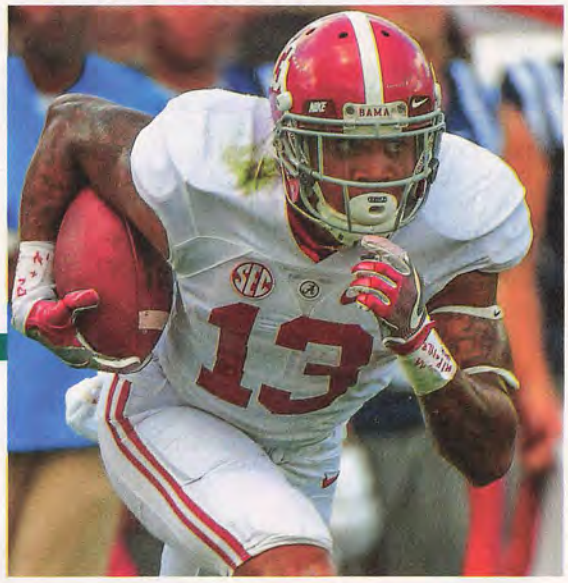
ROUND TWO

33.	Packers	Kevin King	CB	Washington
34.	Jaguars	Cam Robinson	OT	Alabama
35.	Seahawks	Malik McDowell	DT	Michigan State
36.	Cardinals	Budda Baker	S	Washington
37.	Bills	Zay Jones	WR	East Carolina
38.	Chargers	Forrest Lamp	OG	Western Kentucky
39.	Jets	Marcus Maye	S	Florida
40.	Panthers	Curtis Samuel	WR	Ohio State
41.	Vikings	Dalvin Cook	RB	Florida State
42.	Saints	Marcus Williams	S	Utah
43.	Eagles	Sidney Jones	CB	Washington
44.	Rams	Gerald Everett	TE	South Alabama
45.	Bears	Adam Shaheen	TE	Ashland
46.	Colts	Quincy Wilson	CB	Florida
47.	Ravens	Tyus Bowser	OLB	Houston
48.	Bengals	Joe Mixon	RB	Oklahoma
49.	Redskins	Ryan Anderson	OLB	Alabama
50.	Buccaneers	Justin Evans	S	Texas A&M
51.	Broncos	DeMarcus Walker	DE	Florida State
52.	Browns	DeShone Kizer	QB	Notre Dame
53.	Lions	Teez Tabor	CB	Florida
54.	Dolphins	Raekwon McMillan	ILB	Ohio State
55.	Giants	Dalvin Tomlinson	DT	Alabama
56.	Raiders	Obi Melifonwu	S	Connecticut
57.	Texans	Zach Cunningham	OLB	Vanderbilt
58.	Seahawks	Ethan Pocic	C	LSU
59.	Chiefs	Tanoh Kpassagnon	DE	Villanova
60.	Cowboys	Chidobe Awuzie	CB	Colorado
61.	Packers	Josh Jones	S	NC State
62.	Steelers	JuJu Smith-Schuster	WR	USC
63.	Bills	Dion Dawkins	OG	Temple
64.	Panthers	Taylor Moton	OG	Western Michigan

Barnett, Samuel, Stewart, Adams: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Perine: Chris Covatta

ROUND THREE

65.	Browns	Larry Ogunjobi	DT	Charlotte
66.	49ers	Ahkello Witherspoon	CB	Colorado
67.	Saints	Alvin Kamara	RB	Tennessee
68.	Jaguars	Dawuane Smoot	DE	Illinois
69.	Rams	Cooper Kupp	WR	Eastern Washington
70.	Vikings	Pat Elflein	C	Ohio State
71.	Chargers	Dan Feeney	OG	Indiana
72.	Titans	Taywan Taylor	WR	Western Kentucky
73.	Bengals	Jordan Willis	OLB	Kansas State
74.	Ravens	Chris Wormley	DE	Michigan
75.	Falcons	Duke Riley	OLB	LSU
76.	Saints	Alex Anzalone	OLB	Florida
77.	Panthers	Daeshon Hall	DE	Texas A&M
78.	Ravens	Tim Williams	OLB	Alabama
79.	Jets	ArDarius Stewart	WR	Alabama
80.	Colts	Tarell Basham	DE	Ohio
81.	Redskins	Fabian Moreau	CB	UCLA
82.	Broncos	Carlos Henderson	WR	Louisiana Tech
83.	Patriots	Derek Rivers	DE	Youngstown State
84.	Buccaneers	Chris Godwin	WR	Penn State
85.	Patriots	Antonio Garcia	OT	Troy
86.	Chiefs	Kareem Hunt	RB	Toledo
87.	Giants	Davis Webb	QB	California
88.	Raiders	Eddie Vanderdoes	DT	UCLA
89.	Texans	D'Onta Foreman	RB	Texas
90.	Seahawks	Shaquill Griffin	CB	UCF
91.	Rams	John Johnson	S	Boston College
92.	Cowboys	Jourdan Lewis	CB	Michigan
93.	Packers	Montravius Adams	DT	Auburn
94.	Steelers	Cameron Sutton	CB	Tennessee
95.	Seahawks	Delano Hill	S	Michigan
96.	Lions	Kenny Golladay	WR	Northern Illinois
97.	Dolphins	Cordrea Tankersley	CB	Clemson
98.	Cardinals	Chad Williams	WR	Grambling State
99.	Eagles	Rasul Douglas	CB	West Virginia
100.	Titans	Jonnu Smith	TE	FIU
101.	Broncos	Brendan Langley	CB	Lamar
102.	Seahawks	Nazair Jones	DT	North Carolina
103.	Saints	Trey Hendrickson	OLB	Florida Atlantic
104.	49ers	C.J. Beathard	QB	Iowa
105.	Steelers	James Conner	RB	Pittsburgh
106.	Seahawks	Amara Darboh	WR	Michigan
107.	Buccaneers	Kendell Beckwith	ILB	LSU



ROUND FOUR

108.	Packers	Vince Biegel	OLB	Wisconsin
109.	Vikings	Jaleel Johnson	DT	Iowa
110.	Jaguars	Dede Westbrook	WR	Oklahoma
111.	Seahawks	Tedric Thompson	S	Colorado
112.	Bears	Eddie Jackson	S	Alabama
113.	Chargers	Rayshawn Jenkins	S	Miami
114.	Redskins	Samaje Perine	RB	Oklahoma
115.	Cardinals	Dorian Johnson	OG	Pittsburgh
116.	Bengals	Carl Lawson	OLB	Auburn
117.	Rams	Josh Reynolds	WR	Texas A&M
118.	Eagles	Mack Hollins	WR	North Carolina
119.	Bears	Tarik Cohen	RB	North Carolina A&T
120.	Vikings	Ben Gedeon	ILB	Michigan
121.	49ers	Joe Williams	RB	Utah
122.	Ravens	Nico Siragusa	OG	San Diego State
123.	Redskins	Montae Nicholson	S	Michigan State
124.	Lions	Jalen Reeves-Maybin	OLB	Tennessee
125.	Rams	Samson Ebukam	OLB	Eastern Washington
126.	Browns	Howard Wilson	CB	Houston

127.	Lions	Michael Roberts	TE	Toledo
128.	Bengals	Josh Malone	WR	Tennessee
129.	Raiders	David Sharpe	OT	Florida
130.	Texans	Julie'n Davenport	OT	Bucknell
131.	Patriots	Deatrich Wise	DE	Arkansas
132.	Eagles	Donnel Pumphrey	RB	San Diego State
133.	Cowboys	Ryan Switzer	WR	North Carolina
134.	Packers	Jamaal Williams	RB	BYU
135.	Steelers	Joshua Dobbs	QB	Tennessee
136.	Falcons	Sean Harlow	OG	Oregon State
137.	Colts	Zach Banner	OT	USC
138.	Bengals	Ryan Glasgow	DT	Michigan
139.	Chiefs	Jehu Chesson	WR	Michigan
140.	Giants	Wayne Gallman	RB	Clemson
141.	Jets	Chad Hansen	WR	California
142.	Texans	Carlos Watkins	DT	Clemson
143.	Colts	Marlon Mack	RB	South Florida
144.	Colts	Grover Stewart	DT	Albany State

ROUND FOUR CONT'D

ROUND FIVE

145.	Broncos	Jake Butt	TE	Michigan
146.	49ers	George Kittle	TE	Iowa
147.	Bears	Jordan Morgan	OG	Kutztown (Pa.)
148.	Jaguars	Blair Brown	ILB	Ohio
149.	Falcons	Damontae Kazee	CB	San Diego State
150.	Jets	Jordan Leggett	TE	Clemson
151.	Chargers	Desmond King	S	Iowa
152.	Panthers	Corn Elder	CB	Miami
153.	Bengals	Jake Elliott	K	Memphis
154.	Redskins	Jeremy Sprinkle	TE	Arkansas
155.	Titans	Jayon Brown	OLB	UCLA
156.	Falcons	Brian Hill	RB	Wyoming
157.	Cardinals	Will Holden	OT	Vanderbilt
158.	Colts	Nate Hairston	CB	Temple
159.	Ravens	Jermaine Eluemunor	OG	Texas A&M
160.	Browns	Roderick Johnson	OT	Florida State
161.	Colts	Anthony Walker Jr.	ILB	Northwestern
162.	Buccaneers	Jeremy McNichols	RB	Boise State
163.	Bills	Matt Milano	OLB	Boston College
164.	Dolphins	Isaac Asiata	OG	Utah
165.	Lions	Jamal Agnew	CB	San Diego
166.	Eagles	Shelton Gibson	WR	West Virginia
167.	Giants	Avery Moss	DE	Youngstown State
168.	Raiders	Marquel Lee	OLB	Wake Forest
169.	Texans	Treston Decoud	S	Oregon State
170.	Vikings	Rodney Adams	WR	South Florida
171.	Bills	Nathan Peterman	QB	Pittsburgh
172.	Broncos	Isaiah McKenzie	WR	Georgia
173.	Steelers	Brian Allen	CB	Utah
174.	Falcons	Eric Saubert	TE	Drake
175.	Packers	DeAngelo Yancey	WR	Purdue
176.	Bengals	J.J. Dielman	C	Utah
177.	49ers	Trent Taylor	WR	Louisiana Tech
178.	Dolphins	Davon Godchaux	DT	LSU
179.	Cardinals	T.J. Logan	RB	North Carolina
180.	Vikings	Danny Isidora	OG	Miami
181.	Jets	Dylan Donahue	DE	West Georgia
182.	Packers	Aaron Jones	RB	UTEP
183.	Chiefs	Ukeme Eligwe	OLB	Georgia Southern
184.	Eagles	Nate Gerry	S	Nebraska

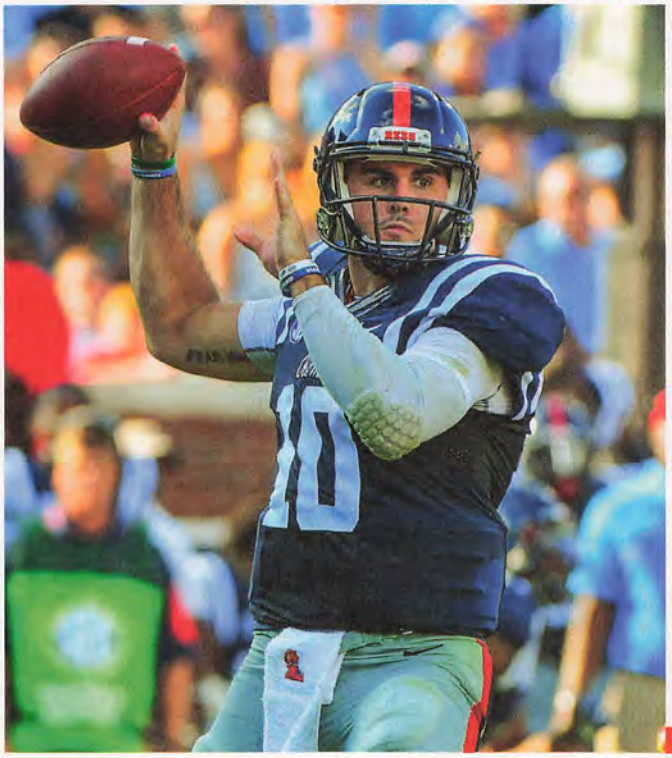
Wise: Chris Keane; Leggett, Kelly: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Taylor: Tim Umphrey

185.	Browns	Caleb Brantley	DT	Florida
186.	Ravens	Chuck Clark	S	Virginia Tech
187.	Seahawks	Mike Tyson	S	Cincinnati
188.	Jets	Elijah McGuire	RB	UL Lafayette
189.	Rams	Tanzel Smart	DT	Tulane
190.	Chargers	Sam Tevi	OT	Utah
191.	Cowboys	Xavier Woods	S	Louisiana Tech
192.	Panthers	Alex Armah	FB	West Georgia
193.	Bengals	Jordan Evans	ILB	Oklahoma
194.	Dolphins	Vincent Taylor	DT	Oklahoma State
195.	Bills	Tanner Vallejo	ILB	Boise State
196.	Saints	Al-Quadin Muhammad	DE	Miami
197.	Jets	Jeremy Clark	CB	Michigan
198.	49ers	D.J. Jones	DT	Ole Miss
199.	Redskins	Chase Roullier	C	Wyoming
200.	Giants	Adam Bisnowaty	OT	Pittsburgh
201.	Vikings	Bucky Hodges	TE	Virginia Tech
202.	49ers	Pita Taumoepenu	OLB	Utah
203.	Broncos	De'Angelo Henderson	RB	Coastal Carolina
204.	Jets	Derrick Jones	CB	Ole Miss
205.	Lions	Jeremiah Ledbetter	DE	Arkansas
206.	Rams	Sam Rogers	FB	Virginia Tech
207.	Bengals	Brandon Wilson	RB	Houston
208.	Cardinals	Rudy Ford	S	Auburn
209.	Redskins	Robert Davis	WR	Georgia State
210.	Seahawks	Justin Senior	OT	Mississippi State
211.	Patriots	Conor McDermott	OT	UCLA
212.	Packers	Kofi Amichia	C	South Florida
213.	Steelers	Colin Holba	LS	Louisville
214.	Eagles	Elijah Qualls	DT	Washington
215.	Lions	Brad Kaaya	QB	Miami
216.	Cowboys	Marquez White	CB	Florida State
217.	Titans	Corey Levin	OG	Chattanooga
218.	Chiefs	Leon McQuay III	S	USC

ROUND SIX

219.	Vikings	Stacy Coley	WR	Miami
220.	Vikings	Ifeadi Odenigbo	DE	Northwestern
221.	Raiders	Shalom Luani	S	Washington State
222.	Jaguars	Jalen Myrick	CB	Minnesota
223.	Buccaneers	Stevie Tu'ikolovatu	DT	USC
224.	Browns	Zane Gonzalez	K	Arizona State
225.	Chargers	Isaac Rochell	DT	Notre Dame
226.	Seahawks	David Moore	WR	East Central (Okla.)
227.	Titans	Josh Carraway	OLB	TCU
228.	Cowboys	Joey Ivie	DT	Florida
229.	49ers	Adrian Colbert	CB	Miami
230.	Redskins	Josh Harvey-Clemons	S	Louisville
231.	Raiders	Jylan Ware	OT	Alabama State
232.	Vikings	Elijah Lee	OLB	Kansas State
233.	Panthers	Harrison Butker	K	Georgia Tech
234.	Rams	Ejuan Price	DE	Pittsburgh
235.	Redskins	Joshua Holsey	CB	Auburn
236.	Titans	Brad Seaton	OT	Villanova
237.	Dolphins	Isaiah Ford	WR	Virginia Tech
238.	Packers	Devante Mays	RB	Utah State
239.	Cowboys	Noah Brown	WR	Ohio State
240.	Jaguars	Marquez Williams	FB	Miami (Ohio)
241.	Titans	Khalfani Muhammad	RB	California
242.	Raiders	Elijah Hood	RB	North Carolina
243.	Texans	Kyle Fuller	C	Baylor
244.	Raiders	Treyvon Hester	DT	Toledo
245.	Vikings	Jack Tocho	CB	NC State
246.	Cowboys	Jordan Carrell	DT	Colorado
247.	Packers	Malachi Dupre	WR	LSU
248.	Steelers	Keion Adams	OLB	Western Michigan
249.	Seahawks	Christopher Carson	RB	Oklahoma State
250.	Lions	Pat O'Connor	DE	Eastern Michigan
251.	Bengals	Mason Schreck	TE	Buffalo
252.	Browns	Matt Dayes	RB	NC State
253.	Broncos	Chad Kelly	QB	Ole Miss

ROUND SEVEN



PRESENTED BY Wrangler

2017 DRAFT RECAP

BY NATHAN RUSH

Quarterback Class of 2017

A supposedly weak crop of QB prospects rose to the top of the draft, with three signal callers taken in the first round following made-for-TV trades on the draft's opening night in Philadelphia. Desperate teams took desperate measures to acquire players they hope will turn into franchise QBs. But other than Deshaun Watson, these fresh faces are expected to redshirt for a season or two, bucking the recent plug-and-play trend for rookie QBs.

Mitch Trubisky, North Carolina

(Bears, second overall)

Da Bears traded first-, third- and fourth-round picks in 2017 and a third-rounder in 2018 to the 49ers to move up one spot from No. 3 to No. 2 overall — a deal that almost certainly gave Bill Swerski's Superfans about a baker's dozen heart attacks. After letting Jay Cutler walk and signing Mike Glennon to a three-year, $45 million deal (with $18.5 mil guaranteed), the league's youngest GM (40-year-old Ryan Pace) went all-in to draft a third-team All-ACC QB who started just 13 games at a traditional basketball school.

Patrick Mahomes II, Texas Tech

(Chiefs, 10th)

The namesake of an 11-year veteran MLB pitcher, Mahomes has a big-league arm that pumped helium into his draft stock and lifted the Red Raider gunslinger into the top 10. Kansas City traded this year's first- and third-round picks and next year's first-rounder to Buffalo to secure a prolific passer who threw for a combined 9,705 yards and 77 TDs over the past two seasons in Lubbock. Mahomes' aggressive style has been compared to Brett Favre, who was coached by Andy Reid in Green Bay. But in K.C., Mahomes will learn the ropes from the anti-Favre, veteran game manager Alex Smith.

Deshaun Watson, Clemson

(Texans, 12th)

Bill O'Brien can praise Tom Savage and Brandon Weeden all he wants, but Houston fans will expect Watson to take charge under center ASAP. After back-to-back national title game appearances — capped by a thrilling last-minute win over Alabama in his final collegiate game — Watson will attempt to guide Houston to its third straight AFC South title. The Texans traded the No. 25 pick and their 2018 first-rounder to snag Watson. As Clemson coach Dabo Swinney famously said, "If you pass on (Watson), you're passing on Michael Jordan."

DeShone Kizer, Notre Dame

(Browns, 52nd)

Tim Couch, Ty Detmer, Doug Pederson, Spergon Wynn, Kelly Holcomb, Jeff Garcia, Luke McCown, Trent Dilfer, Charlie Frye, Derek Anderson, Ken Dorsey, Brady Quinn, Bruce Gradkowski, Colt McCoy, Jake Delhomme, Seneca Wallace, Brandon Weeden, Thaddeus Lewis, Jason Campbell, Brian Hoyer, Johnny Manziel, Connor Shaw, Josh McCown, Austin Davis, Robert Griffin III, Cody Kessler... Will DeShone Kizer become the 27th starting QB since the rebirth of the expansion Browns in 1999? Cleveland fans hope the Irish QB from Toledo can bring respectability back to "The Land" — like that kid from Akron did with the Cavaliers.

Davis Webb, California

(Giants, 87th)

Get Eli Manning game-worn memorabilia while you still can, because the G-Men are preparing for life after the two-time Super Bowl MVP. Webb is accustomed to competition, having beaten out Oklahoma's Heisman Trophy finalist Baker Mayfield while the two were at Texas Tech — before Webb transferred to Cal (after getting beaten out by Patrick Mahomes II at Tech).

C.J. Beathard, Iowa

(49ers, 104th)

Former Super Bowl-winning coach Mike Shanahan's son (first-year Niners coach Kyle Shanahan) fell in love with former Super Bowl-winning GM Bobby Beathard's grandson. San Fran pulled the trigger earlier than expected to secure this blue-blood coach-QB combo.

Joshua Dobbs, Tennessee

(Steelers, 135th)

With Ben Roethlisberger playing on a year-to-year basis, Pittsburgh brings in competition for backup Landry Jones. Dobbs was an aerospace engineering major at UT; but being a rocket scientist is easier than being an NFL QB.

MITCH TRUBISKY

Nathan Peterman, Pittsburgh

(Bills, 171st)

One of YouTube's favorite trick shot artists, Peterman was replaced by Dobbs at Tennessee before transferring to Pitt. Peterman threw five touchdowns and zero interceptions in a 43–42 win at Clemson last year, showing an ability to rise to the occasion on the biggest stage.

Brad Kaaya, Miami

(Lions, 215th)

"Bye, Felisha." Kaaya's actress mother has become a cult sensation for her role as Felisha in the 1995 comedy "Friday." Kaaya hopes to build a similar following for his work on Sunday.

Chad Kelly, Ole Miss

(Broncos, 253rd)

The G.O.A.T. QB Class of 1983 continues to make noise. Denver decider John Elway made Jim Kelly's nephew the most relevant "Mr. Irrelevant" ever, as the final pick of the seventh round. Chad Kelly comes with plenty of off-field baggage from stops at Clemson, East Mississippi CC and Ole Miss. But Elway has the inside scoop. "I called his uncle, and he said, 'He's a good kid,'" Elway told ESPN. "I said, 'Okay, that's all I need.' I trust Jim with that."

Trubisky: AP; Garrett: Marc Morrison; Adams: Joe Robbins/Getty Images

Top Dawg: Myles Garrett

Cleveland's Dawg Pound has a new favorite player: Texas A&M pass rusher Myles Garrett. The 6'4", 272-pounder joins Courtney Brown (2000) and Tim Couch (1999) as the third No. 1 overall pick in expansion Browns history. We caught up with the consensus best player in the 2017 draft.

What are your goals for the NFL?
Rookie of the Year. I want to win a Super Bowl. I want to be Defensive Player of the Year. I want to be MVP. I want to be Super Bowl MVP. But I've got to work hard to achieve all those things. It's not going to be handed to me.

Who do you model your game after?
Von Miller and J.J. Watt. Those are the top two.

What's your best pass rush move?
I don't think I have any move that's better than another. If you try to rely on me being a speed rusher, I'll show you great power. If you think I'm a bull rusher, I'll run right by you.

What are your interests off the field?
I am big into dinosaurs. I'm into poetry. I'm into writing. I love reading. I'm a basketball fan, through and through. I love boxing and soccer. I'm a huge Barça fan.

Who's your favorite player on FC Barcelona?
It's hard not to say Messi. He's probably 80 percent of the world's favorite. But if not him, probably Piqué.

Who's your favorite poet?
Maya Angelou.

What's your favorite dinosaur?
Spinosaurus aegyptiacus. It's the biggest land carnivore of all time.

You studied architecture at A&M, do you plan on designing your own house?
I'd like to. If I get the chance and get the time, I'd like to do that.

Your older brother, Sean Williams, had off-court issues derail his NBA career. What have you learned from his mistakes?
Don't waste potential. He had so much untapped potential in the NBA and he let it go. And I don't think he's too hard-headed or too prideful to say that.

What are you looking forward to at the next level?
Dominating. Having fun. They go hand in hand. If you're having fun, you're dominating, usually. And if you're dominating, you're definitely having fun.

Wide Receiver Run

Three wideouts went in the top 10 — Western Michigan's Corey Davis (Titans, No. 5), Clemson's Mike Williams (Chargers, No. 7) and Washington's John Ross (Bengals, No. 9) — for the first time since 2005. Fans in Nashville, L.A. and Cincy hope this year's pass catchers fare better than the eerily similar '05 trio — Michigan's Braylon Edwards (Browns, No. 3), South Carolina's Troy Williamson (Vikings, No. 7) and USC's Mike Williams (Lions, No. 10).

JAMAL ADAMS

Pay Up, Pops

The Jets took Jamal Adams at No. 6 overall, making the LSU safety a higher draft choice than his father, George, who went No. 19 overall to the Giants in 1985. And while it is cool that both members of the Adams family were drafted by teams in New York, the real significance is a big-money bet Jamal made with his dad. As a kid, Jamal bet George that he would be drafted higher than his old man — and it happened. "There's been word out there that it was $40,000. No. It was $100,000," Jamal said in his introductory press conference. "He doesn't want to pay. So, I'm going to continue letting him take care of the dinner tab."

PRESENTED BY Wrangler

2017 DRAFT RECAP

BY NATHAN RUSH

Mr. 422

Washington receiver John Ross is officially the fastest man in the NFL, after running a record-breaking 4.22 in the 40-yard dash at the NFL Combine.

Hands Team

Ohio State safety Malik Hooker (Colts, No. 15) cemented his status as the top ball-hawking center fielder in this year's class. In addition to top-flight instincts, long arms and requisite speed, Hooker boasts enormous 10¾" hands — which he used to haul in seven INTs for the Buckeyes last year. Hooker's hands were the biggest among defensive backs at the NFL Combine this year, with only three others reaching the 10" mark.

MALIK HOOKER

MARLON HUMPHREY

Defensive Back Draft

There was a serious run on DBs. Eight defensive backs were taken in the first round, and 28 cornerbacks or safeties were drafted in the top 100.

Hometown Hero

The Steelers drafted local Pittsburgh running back James Conner, who was the ACC Player of the Year in 2014 before being diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in 2015. Conner battled back from cancer to become the No. 105 overall pick.

JAMES CONNER

JAKE BUTT

Insurance Policy

LSU power back Leonard Fournette (Jaguars, No. 4) and Stanford triple threat Christian McCaffrey (Panthers, No. 8) were widely criticized for choosing to sit out their schools' respective bowl games. Michigan tight end Jake Butt wishes he had done the same. A likely first- or second-round pick, Butt injured his knee in the Orange Bowl and fell all the way to the Broncos at No. 145 overall. Fortunately, Butt will receive a tax-free insurance settlement of $543,000. But ultimately, he lost somewhere between $2-3 million on his first contract.

Hooker, Williams: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Humphrey: Layne Murdoch; Conner: Bruce Schwartzman; Butt: Tom Lynn; Krupp: AP; McCaffrey: Peter Brouillet

Third Generation

Cooper Kupp rewrote the FCS record book at Eastern Washington, setting career records in catches (428), receiving yards (6,464) and receiving TDs (73). He's also the third generation of Kupps to be drafted in the NFL; Cooper (Rams, No. 69) joins his father, Craig (Giants, 1990), and grandfather, Jake (Cowboys, 1964).

COOPER KUPP

Hail to the Victors!

While Jim Harbaugh was in Rome giving Air Jordans to Pope Francis, his Michigan Wolverines dominated this year's NFL Draft, with 11 players selected. Here's a rundown of schools whose alumni just got a lot richer.

Michigan	11
Alabama	10
Florida	8
LSU	8
Miami (Fla.)	8
Utah	8
Ohio State	7
Clemson	6
North Carolina	6
Tennessee	6
Pittsburgh	5
Texas A&M	5
UCLA	5
USC	5
Washington	5

What's in a Name?

Clemson receiver Mike Williams (Chargers, No. 7) is the 10th "Mike Williams" to be selected in NFL Draft history and the fourth "Mike Williams" to go in the first round. Unfortunately, the nine previous Mike Williamses have combined for zero Pro Bowl appearances.

MIKE WILLIAMS

Power Five

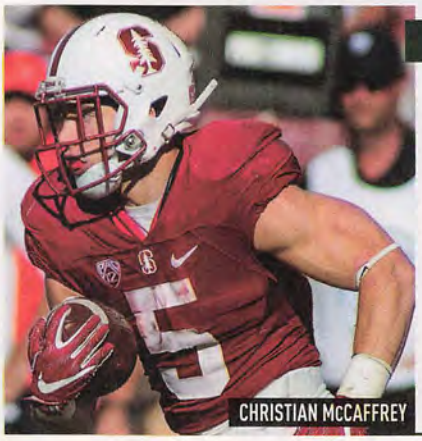
Of the 253 players drafted, 181 (or 71.5 percent) came from a "Power 5" conference. The SEC earned the top spot, yet again. But the Big 12 struggled, with fewer players drafted (14) than the American Athletic Conference (15).

SEC	53
ACC	43
Pac-12	36
Big Ten	35
Big 12	14

Patriots Draft Decoded

Technically, New England drafted just four players — the fewest selections by a reigning Super Bowl champ since the 1995 San Francisco 49ers, according to Elias Sports Bureau. But what that doesn't account for is the draft capital traded away for veteran players. This is the "real" Patriots draft, in order of picks used/traded:

Brandin Cooks, WR (via Saints)
Kony Ealy, DE (via Panthers)
Derek Rivers, DE, Youngstown State
Antonio Garcia, OT, Troy
Deatrich Wise, DE, Arkansas
Dwayne Allen, TE (via Colts)
James O'Shaughnessy, TE (via Chiefs)
Mike Gillislee, RB (via Bills)
Conor McDermott, OT, UCLA


CHRISTIAN McCAFFREY

Family Tradition

It's been well publicized that Christian McCaffrey's father, Ed, was a three-time Super Bowl-winning receiver during his 13-year NFL career. But Christian's elite sports bloodlines don't stop there. His uncle, Billy McCaffrey, scored 16 points in Duke basketball's 1991 national championship game win, before transferring and becoming an All-American at Vanderbilt. And Christian's maternal grandfather, David Sime, won the silver medal in the 100-meter dash at the 1960 Rome Olympics.

Top 50 for 2018

1.	Sam Darnold	QB	USC
2.	Arden Key	DE	LSU
3.	Mike McGlinchey	OT	Notre Dame
4.	Christian Kirk	WR	Texas A&M
5.	Josh Allen	QB	Wyoming
6.	Derwin James	FS	Florida State
7.	Malik Jefferson	OLB	Texas
8.	Sam Hubbard	DE	Ohio State
9.	Saquon Barkley	RB	Penn State
10.	Quenton Nelson	OG	Notre Dame
11.	Calvin Ridley	WR	Alabama
12.	Christian Wilkins	DT	Clemson
13.	Mitch Hyatt	OT	Clemson
14.	Tyquan Lewis	DE	Ohio State
15.	Minkah Fitzpatrick	CB	Alabama
16.	Tarvarus McFadden	CB	Florida State
17.	Josh Rosen	QB	UCLA
18.	Cameron Smith	ILB	USC
19.	Da'Ron Payne	DT	Alabama
20.	Derrius Guice	RB	LSU
21.	Da'Shawn Hand	DE	Alabama
22.	Bradley Chubb	DE	NC State
23.	Martez Ivey	OG	Florida
24.	James Washington	WR	Oklahoma State
25.	Jordan Whitehead	FS	Pittsburgh
26.	Jaire Alexander	CB	Louisville
27.	Brian Allen	C	Michigan State
28.	Martinas Rankin	OT	Mississippi State
29.	Byron Cowart	DE	Auburn
30.	Harold Landry	OLB	Boston College
31.	Adonis Alexander	CB	Virginia Tech
32.	Courtland Sutton	WR	SMU
33.	Jerry Tillery	DL	Notre Dame
34.	Jake Browning	QB	Washington
35.	Antonio Callaway	WR	Florida
36.	Geron Christian	OT	Louisville
37.	Shaun Dion Hamilton	ILB	Alabama
38.	Brock Ruble	OT	Florida State
39.	Marcell Frazier	DE	Missouri
40.	Trenton Thompson	DT	Georgia
41.	Toby Weathersby	OT	LSU
42.	Porter Gustin	DE	USC
43.	Parris Campbell	WR	Ohio State
44.	Bo Scarbrough	RB	Alabama
45.	Iman Marshall	CB	USC
46.	CeCe Jefferson	DE	Florida
47.	Royce Freeman	RB	Oregon
48.	Josh Sweat	DE	Florida State
49.	Billy Price	OG	Ohio State
50.	Dalton Schultz	TE	Stanford

SAM DARNOLD

ARDEN KEY

Darnold: Peter Brouillet; Key: Tom Lynn; Barkley: Bruce Schwartzman; Wilkins, Washington: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

Top 5 Per Position 2018 Draft

QUARTERBACKS

1. Sam Darnold USC
2. Josh Allen Wyoming
3. Josh Rosen UCLA
4. Jake Browning Washington
5. Mason Rudolph Oklahoma State

RUNNING BACKS

1. Saquon Barkley Penn State
2. Derrius Guice LSU
3. Bo Scarbrough Alabama
4. Royce Freeman Oregon
5. Nick Chubb Georgia

WIDE RECEIVERS

1. Christian Kirk Texas A&M
2. Calvin Ridley Alabama
3. James Washington Oklahoma State
4. Courtland Sutton SMU
5. Antonio Callaway Florida

TIGHT ENDS

1. Dalton Schultz Stanford
2. Troy Fumagalli Wisconsin
3. DeAndre Goolsby Florida
4. Mark Andrews Oklahoma
5. Cam Serigne Wake Forest

CENTERS

1. Brian Allen Michigan State
2. Nick Linder Miami
3. Will Clapp LSU
4. Mason Cole Michigan
5. Austin Golson Auburn

OFFENSIVE GUARDS

1. Quenton Nelson Notre Dame
2. Martez Ivey Florida
3. Billy Price Ohio State
4. Scott Quessenberry UCLA
5. Cody O'Connell Washington State

OFFENSIVE TACKLES

1. Mike McGlinchey Notre Dame
2. Mitch Hyatt Clemson
3. Martinas Rankin Mississippi State
4. Geron Christian Louisville
5. Brock Ruble Florida State

DEFENSIVE ENDS

1. Arden Key LSU
2. Sam Hubbard Ohio State
3. Tyquan Lewis Ohio State
4. Da'Shawn Hand Alabama
5. Bradley Chubb NC State

DEFENSIVE TACKLES

1. Christian Wilkins Clemson
2. Da'Ron Payne Alabama
3. Jerry Tillery Notre Dame
4. Trenton Thompson Georgia
5. Derrick Nnadi Florida State

INSIDE LINEBACKERS

1. Cameron Smith USC
2. Shaun Dion Hamilton Alabama
3. Kendall Joseph Clemson
4. Azeem Victor Washington
5. Jack Cichy Wisconsin

OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS

1. Malik Jefferson Texas
2. Harold Landry Boston College
3. Porter Gustin USC
4. Tremaine Edmunds Virginia Tech
5. Skai Moore South Carolina

CORNERBACKS

1. Minkah Fitzpatrick Alabama
2. Tarvarus McFadden Florida State
3. Jaire Alexander Louisville
4. Adonis Alexander Virginia Tech
5. Iman Marshall USC

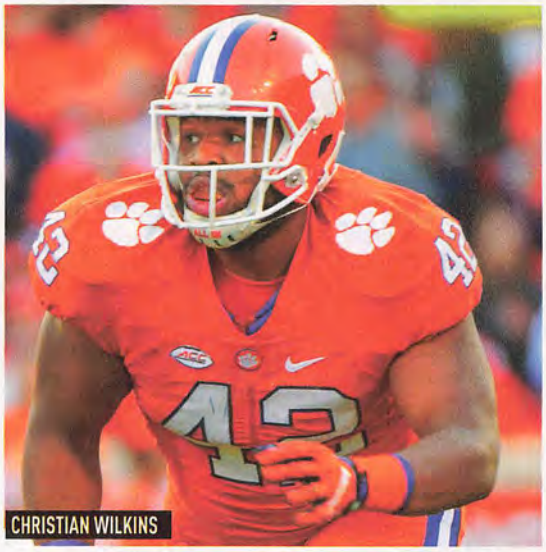
STRONG SAFETIES

1. Nick Washington Florida
2. Damon Webb Ohio State
3. Kyzir White West Virginia
4. Trey Marshall Florida State
5. D'Cota Dixon Wisconsin

FREE SAFETIES

1. Derwin James Florida State
2. Jordan Whitehead Pittsburgh
3. Armani Watts Texas A&M
4. Ronnie Harrison Alabama
5. Van Smith Clemson

SAQUON BARKLEY

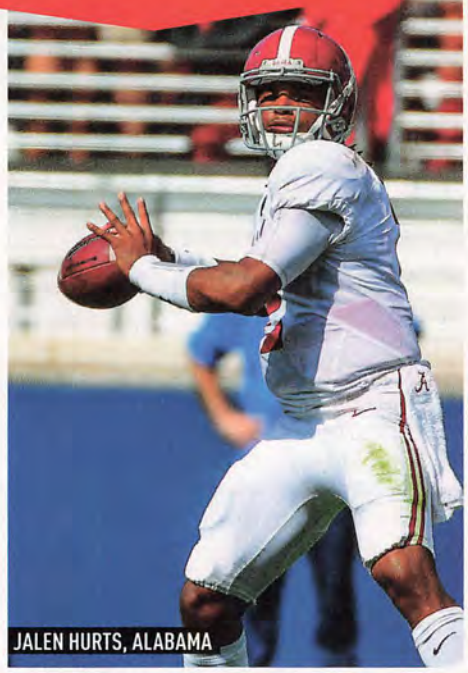

CHRISTIAN WILKINS

MINKAH FITZPATRICK

COLLEGE FOOTBALL PRESEASON 130

FBS RANKINGS

1. Alabama
2. Ohio State
3. Florida State
4. Washington
5. USC
6. Penn State
7. Clemson
8. Oklahoma
9. Auburn
10. Michigan
11. LSU
12. Wisconsin
13. Texas
14. Oklahoma State
15. Georgia
16. Florida
17. Stanford
18. Louisville
19. Tennessee
20. Notre Dame
21. Oregon
22. Kansas State
23. Miami
24. USF
25. Virginia Tech
26. West Virginia
27. NC State
28. Washington State
29. Arkansas
30. Mississippi State
31. Pittsburgh
32. TCU
33. UCLA
34. Colorado
35. Boise State
36. Georgia Tech
37. Texas A&M
38. Utah
39. BYU
40. South Carolina
41. Northwestern
42. North Carolina
43. Nebraska
44. Iowa
45. Kentucky
46. Ole Miss
47. Baylor
48. Vanderbilt
49. Michigan State
50. Minnesota
51. Memphis
52. Wake Forest
53. Arizona State
54. Indiana
55. Missouri
56. Navy
57. Maryland
58. Colorado State
59. Houston
60. Iowa State
61. San Diego State
62. Duke
63. Syracuse
64. Texas Tech
65. Oregon State
66. Arizona
67. Appalachian State
68. Troy
69. Toledo
70. Boston College
71. Louisiana Tech
72. Wyoming
73. WKU
74. Tulsa
75. Middle Tennessee
76. California
77. Air Force
78. Miami (Ohio)
79. UCF
80. Army
81. Temple
82. SMU
83. Western Michigan
84. Purdue
85. Ohio
86. Arkansas State
87. Virginia
88. Hawaii
89. Kansas
90. Old Dominion
91. Rutgers
92. Illinois
93. Southern Miss
94. UTSA
95. Cincinnati
96. New Mexico
97. Utah State
98. FAU
99. Northern Illinois
100. Tulane
101. Connecticut
102. Eastern Michigan
103. South Alabama
104. Idaho
105. UNLV
106. Central Michigan
107. Marshall
108. North Texas
109. Akron
110. Louisiana
111. Georgia Southern
112. East Carolina
113. FIU
114. Bowling Green
115. Nevada
116. Ball State
117. Fresno State
118. Rice
119. ULM
120. UTEP
121. Georgia State
122. San Jose State
123. Buffalo
124. Coastal Carolina
125. New Mexico State
126. Charlotte
127. Kent State
128. UMass
129. Texas State
130. UAB


JALEN HURTS, ALABAMA

J.T. BARRETT, OHIO STATE

DEONDRE FRANCOIS, FLORIDA STATE

Hurts, Barrett: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Francois: John Sommers II

CONFERENCE PREDICTIONS

Records are projections for the 2017 season, overall and conference, through the regular season and conference championship games

ACC

ATLANTIC

1. Florida State 12-1, 8-0
2. Clemson 10-2, 6-2
3. Louisville 9-3, 5-3
4. NC State 7-5, 4-4
5. Wake Forest 6-6, 3-5
6. Syracuse 5-7, 2-6
7. Boston College 5-7, 2-6

COASTAL

1. Miami 9-4, 5-3
2. Virginia Tech 9-3, 5-3
3. Pittsburgh 7-5, 5-3
4. Georgia Tech 7-5, 4-4
5. North Carolina 7-5, 4-4
6. Duke 4-8, 2-6
7. Virginia 3-9, 1-7

ACC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Florida State over Miami

AMERICAN ATHLETIC

EAST

1. USF 12-1, 7-1
2. UCF 7-5, 5-3
3. Temple 6-6, 4-4
4. Cincinnati 4-8, 2-6
5. Connecticut 3-9, 2-6
6. East Carolina 3-9, 2-6

WEST

1. Memphis 9-4, 6-2
2. Navy 8-4, 5-3
3. Houston 7-5, 5-3
4. Tulsa 7-5, 5-3
5. SMU 6-6, 3-5
6. Tulane 4-8, 2-6

AAC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

USF over Memphis

BIG 12

1. Oklahoma 11-2, 8-1
2. Texas 9-4, 7-2
3. Oklahoma State 9-3, 6-3
4. Kansas State 8-4, 5-4
5. West Virginia 7-5, 5-4
6. TCU 7-5, 5-4
7. Baylor 6-6, 3-6
8. Iowa State 5-7, 3-6
9. Texas Tech 5-7, 3-6
10. Kansas 3-9, 0-9

BIG 12 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Oklahoma over Texas

BIG TEN

EAST

1. Ohio State 12-1, 8-1
2. Penn State 10-2, 7-2
3. Michigan 10-2, 7-2
4. Michigan State 6-6, 4-5
5. Indiana 7-5, 4-5
6. Maryland 6-6, 4-5
7. Rutgers 3-9, 1-8

WEST

1. Wisconsin 10-3, 7-2
2. Northwestern 8-4, 5-4
3. Nebraska 7-5, 5-4
4. Iowa 7-5, 4-5
5. Minnesota 6-6, 4-5
6. Purdue 3-9, 2-7
7. Illinois 2-10, 1-8

BIG TEN CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Ohio State over Wisconsin

CONFERENCE USA

EAST

1. WKU 9-4, 6-2
2. Middle Tennessee 7-5, 6-2
3. Old Dominion 7-5, 5-3
4. FAU 6-6, 4-4
5. Marshall 5-7, 4-4
6. FIU 5-7, 4-4
7. Charlotte 3-9, 1-7

WEST

1. Louisiana Tech 9-4, 6-2
2. Southern Miss 7-5, 5-3
3. UTSA 7-5, 5-3
4. North Texas 5-7, 3-5
5. Rice 3-9, 3-5
6. UTEP 3-9, 3-5
7. UAB 3-9, 1-7

C-USA CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Louisiana Tech over WKU

INDEPENDENTS

1. Notre Dame 8-4
2. BYU 9-4
3. Army 7-5
4. UMass 2-10

MAC

EAST

1. Miami (Ohio) 8-5, 6-2
2. Ohio 7-5, 5-3
3. Akron 5-7, 4-4
4. Bowling Green 4-8, 3-5
5. Buffalo 3-9, 2-6
6. Kent State 3-9, 2-6

WEST

1. Toledo 10-3, 6-2
2. Western Michigan 7-5, 5-3
3. Northern Illinois 6-6, 5-3
4. Eastern Michigan 5-7, 4-4
5. Central Michigan 5-7, 4-4
6. Ball State 4-8, 2-6

MAC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Toledo over Miami (Ohio)

MOUNTAIN WEST

MOUNTAIN

1. Boise State 10-3, 7-1
2. Colorado State 8-4, 6-2
3. Wyoming 7-5, 5-3
4. Air Force 6-6, 4-4
5. New Mexico 6-6, 4-4
6. Utah State 4-8, 3-5

WEST

1. San Diego State 8-5, 6-2
2. Hawaii 7-5, 5-3
3. UNLV 4-8, 3-5
4. Nevada 3-9, 2-6
5. Fresno State 3-9, 2-6
6. San Jose State 2-11, 1-7

MW CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Boise State over San Diego State

PAC-12

NORTH

1. Washington 12-1, 8-1
2. Stanford 9-3, 6-3
3. Oregon 8-4, 5-4
4. Washington State 8-4, 5-4
5. Oregon State 5-7, 3-6
6. California 3-9, 2-7

SOUTH

1. USC 11-2, 8-1
2. UCLA 7-5, 5-4
3. Colorado 7-5, 4-5
4. Utah 7-5, 4-5
5. Arizona State 5-7, 2-7
6. Arizona 5-7, 2-7

PAC-12 CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Washington over USC

SEC

EAST

1. Georgia 9-4, 6-2
2. Florida 8-4, 6-2
3. Tennessee 8-4, 4-4
4. South Carolina 6-6, 4-4
5. Kentucky 7-5, 4-4
6. Vanderbilt 6-6, 3-5
7. Missouri 5-7, 1-7

WEST

1. Alabama 12-1, 7-1
2. Auburn 9-3, 6-2
3. LSU 9-3, 5-3
4. Arkansas 7-5, 3-5
5. Mississippi State 7-5, 3-5
6. Texas A&M 7-5, 3-5
7. Ole Miss 5-7, 1-7

SEC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME

Alabama over Georgia

SUN BELT

1. Appalachian State 9-3, 7-1
2. Troy 9-3, 7-1
3. Arkansas State 7-5, 6-2
4. South Alabama 6-6, 5-3
5. Idaho 6-6, 4-4
6. Louisiana 5-7, 4-4
7. Georgia Southern 5-7, 4-4
8. ULM 4-8, 4-4
9. Georgia State 3-9, 2-6
10. Coastal Carolina 4-8, 2-6
11. New Mexico State 3-9, 2-6
12. Texas State 2-10, 1-7

WHO'S #1?

Le'Veon Bell

"Unless you think David Johnson and/or **Le'Veon Bell** will bust marvelously, there's just no way to displace them at the top of your draft. Both backs outscored the top wide receiver, Antonio Brown, by roughly 5-7 points per game across fantasy scoring formats last season. Johnson's 20 total TDs leave room for regression, but he's also capable of improving on 4.2 yards per carry and a 66.7 percent catch rate. Bell ranked in the top three in scoring across formats despite missing four games. He tallied three more carries per game last year than his previous high, but his numbers weren't otherwise out of line with previous campaigns. The risk with him is the injury history, but he's a better bet for per-game points. I'll take him just ahead of Johnson."
— Matt Schauf, DraftSharks.com

"At first it was a toss-up between David Johnson and **Le'Veon Bell**, but when you consider that Johnson still has Carson Palmer as his quarterback, the decision to tab Bell as the No. 1 overall pick in this year's fantasy drafts is rather simple. The knock on Bell has always been that he's slightly injury-prone, but his production is well worth the risk. Not only could he rush for more than 1,500 yards, but he's also basically the Steelers' No. 2 receiver, meaning he has the opportunity to add 75-plus catches. The potential is there for a 1,000-yard rushing and a 1,000-yard receiving season. Throw in 10-plus touchdowns and you have a fantasy stud."
— Michael Horvath, AthlonSports.com contributor

"**Le'Veon Bell** is my No. 1 this season. With a very real 1A and 1B situation between David Johnson and Bell, I lean to Bell because of his opportunity to capitalize on a full season. With a more potent receiving corps that should only improve his output and usefulness in the offense, Bell will remain a player who gets it done in all aspects of fantasy. Another 1,500 rushing yards and 500-plus receiving yards are not out of the question. In fact, Bell's chances may be better than Johnson's in this respect due to a stronger supporting cast."
— Chris Meyers, AthlonSports.com contributor

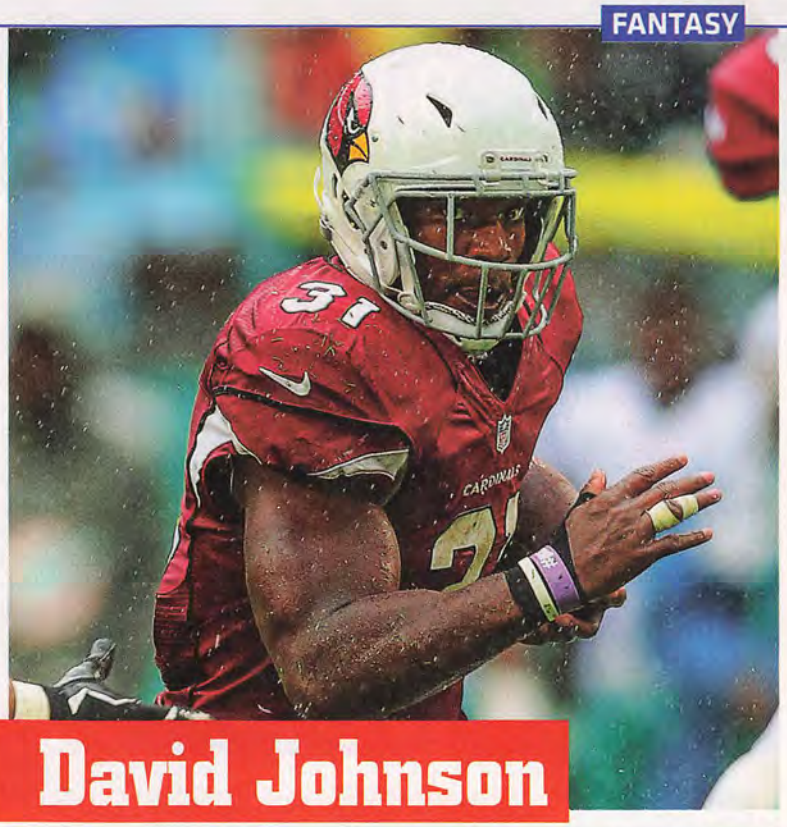
Bell: Brett Carlsen/Getty Images; Johnson: W.E. Smith II/Athlon Sports; Elliott: Layne Murdoch/Athlon Sports

"Last year in this space, I couldn't bring myself to endorse **David Johnson** for the No. 1 overall pick based on his part-time status as a rookie in 2015. With most draft formats relegating you to the end of Round 2, No. 1 overall is no place to gamble. But those who did won big with Johnson, and he looks like a much safer bet this time around. While I still worry that his 20-touchdown 2016 will be difficult to repeat, he proved to be durable enough to play all 16 games, and he doubled his receptions per game. The result was a league-best 2,118 yards from scrimmage, a number he should approach again. Maybe Ezekiel Elliott improves on a stunning rookie season and passes Johnson. Maybe Le'Veon Bell plays all 16 games. But I'm not betting on a maybe at No. 1."
- John Gworek, Athlon Sports

"**David Johnson** gets 20-plus carries per game regularly, and he hauled in seven or more catches five times in his last 10 games last year. This Cardinals' offense is dynamic on the ground and in the air, and that makes Johnson a threat on every snap. While I'd be satisfied with Ezekiel Elliott at No. 2 and Le'Veon Bell at No. 3, I'm more than happy taking the best player in fantasy football at No. 1, knowing his NFL team wants him to score as much as his fantasy owners do."
— David Gonos, FNTSY.com/ SoCalledFantasyExperts.com

"In a league where it's hard to find a three-down back, especially one who also can line up as a receiver, **David Johnson** is the No. 1 overall pick for fantasy drafts in 2017. He's only 25, and it is likely that Johnson will see 30 touches a game this season. In fact, the Cardinals are looking to find ways to get him the ball even more, while Le'Veon Bell may see a reduced workload because of injuries he's suffered in the past. The sample size on Johnson is small (the end of 2015 and the '16 season), but he has shown he's one of the most talented running backs in the league — which means plenty of fantasy points for his owners. Don't forget that he had the second-most rushing touchdowns (16) and the most total scores (20) in the NFL."
— Sarah Lewis, AthlonSports.com contributor

"You can't go wrong with Le'Veon Bell, Ezekiel Elliott or **David Johnson** as the No. 1 pick, but my choice would be Johnson. As great as Elliott was last season, I think the Cowboys' offense leans too heavy to the run, which limits his opportunities as a receiver. Bell is a stud, but he's missed time each of the past two seasons (for different reasons), and his supporting cast is stronger than Johnson's. The Cardinals' offense revolves around Johnson, and that's not likely to change with 37-year-old Carson Palmer at quarterback. All three running backs are going to get plenty of touches; I just like Johnson's chances of doing more damage when he has the ball."
— Mark Ross, Athlon Sports



David Johnson

Ezekiel Elliott

"I think you can make legitimate arguments for any of the three best running backs in the NFL — David Johnson, Le'Veon Bell or **Ezekiel Elliott**. All three figure to be heavily involved in their respective team's offense, but Elliott is part of an attack that is built around the run rather than the pass. The strength of Dallas' offensive line also serves as a bit of a tiebreaker. Johnson and Bell both ended last year hurt, and the latter has been suspended previously for some off-the-field missteps. The Cowboys also are more likely to give Elliott the ball to protect late leads and run down the clock compared to the Cardinals or Steelers. It's splitting hairs, but I feel safest about Elliott returning the value of No. 1 overall." *— Rivers McCown, Football Outsiders*

FANTASY FOOTBALL

POSITION RANKINGS

AARON RODGERS

QUARTERBACKS

QUARTERBACKS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. Aaron **Rodgers**	GB	8
☐ 2. Tom **Brady**	NE	9
☐ 3. Drew **Brees**	NO	5
☐ 4. Andrew **Luck**	IND	11
☐ 5. Russell **Wilson**	SEA	6
☐ 6. Philip **Rivers**	LAC	9
☐ 7. Kirk **Cousins**	WAS	5
☐ 8. Dak **Prescott**	DAL	6
☐ 9. Jameis **Winston**	TB	11
☐10. Matthew **Stafford**	DET	7
☐ 11. Cam **Newton**	CAR	11
☐12. Marcus **Mariota**	TEN	8
☐13. Ben **Roethlisberger**	PIT	9
☐14. Matt **Ryan**	ATL	5
☐15. Blake **Bortles**	JAC	8
☐16. Andy **Dalton**	CIN	6
☐ 17. Tyrod **Taylor**	BUF	6
☐18. Eli **Manning**	NYG	8
☐19. Derek **Carr**	OAK	10
☐20. Carson **Wentz**	PHI	10
☐ 21. Alex **Smith**	KC	10
☐22. Ryan **Tannehill**	MIA	11
☐23. Carson **Palmer**	ARI	8
☐24. Joe **Flacco**	BAL	10
☐25. Sam **Bradford**	MIN	9
☐26. Brian **Hoyer**	SF	11
☐ 27. Jared **Goff**	LAR	8
☐28. Josh **McCown**	NYJ	11
☐29. Trevor **Siemian**	DEN	5
☐30. Paxton **Lynch**	DEN	5
☐ 31. Tom **Savage**	HOU	7
☐32. Mike **Glennon**	CHI	9
☐33. Cody **Kessler**	CLE	9
☐34. Mitchell **Trubisky**	CHI	9
☐35. Deshaun **Watson**	HOU	7
☐36. Patrick **Mahomes**	KC	10
☐ 37. Brock **Osweiler**	CLE	9
☐38. Derek **Anderson**	CAR	11
☐39. Case **Keenum**	MIN	9
☐40. Drew **Stanton**	ARI	8

RUNNING BACKS

RUNNING BACKS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. David **Johnson**	ARI	8
☐ 2. Le'Veon **Bell**	PIT	9
☐ 3. Ezekiel **Elliott**	DAL	6
☐ 4. Melvin **Gordon**	LAC	9
☐ 5. Devonta **Freeman**	ATL	5
☐ 6. LeSean **McCoy**	BUF	6
☐ 7. Jordan **Howard**	CHI	9
☐ 8. Jay **Ajayi**	MIA	11
☐ 9. DeMarco **Murray**	TEN	8
☐10. Lamar **Miller**	HOU	7
☐ 11. Todd **Gurley**	LAR	8
☐12. Carlos **Hyde**	SF	11
☐13. Leonard **Fournette**	JAC	8
☐14. Christian **McCaffrey**	CAR	11
☐15. Ty **Montgomery**	GB	8
☐16. Isaiah **Crowell**	CLE	9
☐ 17. Mark **Ingram**	NO	5
☐18. Tevin **Coleman**	ATL	5
☐19. Paul **Perkins**	NYG	8
☐20. Dalvin **Cook**	MIN	9
☐ 21. Bilal **Powell**	NYJ	11
☐22. C.J. **Anderson**	DEN	5
☐23. Spencer **Ware**	KC	10
☐24. Danny **Woodhead**	BAL	10
☐25. Theo **Riddick**	DET	7
☐26. Gio **Bernard**	CIN	6
☐ 27. Eddie **Lacy**	SEA	6
☐28. Frank **Gore**	IND	11
☐29. Mike **Gillislee**	NE	9
☐30. Marshawn **Lynch**	OAK	10
☐ 31. Kenneth **Dixon**	BAL	10
☐32. Matt **Forté**	NYJ	11
☐33. Samaje **Perine**	WAS	5
☐34. C.J. **Prosise**	SEA	6
☐35. Ameer **Abdullah**	DET	7
☐36. Joe **Mixon**	CIN	6
☐ 37. Kareem **Hunt**	KC	10
☐38. Doug **Martin**	TB	11
☐39. Adrian **Peterson**	NO	5
☐40. Derrick **Henry**	TEN	8
☐41. Rex **Burkhead**	NE	9
☐42. Duke **Johnson Jr.**	CLE	9
☐43. Darren **Sproles**	PHI	10
☐44. James **White**	NE	9
☐45. Latavius **Murray**	MIN	9
☐46. Jamaal **Charles**	DEN	5
☐ 47. Wendell **Smallwood**	PHI	10
☐48. Marlon **Mack**	IND	11
☐49. Ryan **Mathews**	PHI	10
☐50. Jalen **Richard**	OAK	10
☐ 51. DeAndre **Washington**	OAK	10
☐52. Chris **Thompson**	WAS	5
☐53. Shane **Vereen**	NYG	8
☐54. Rob **Kelley**	WAS	5
☐55. Jonathan **Williams**	BUF	6
☐56. Charles **Sims**	TB	11
☐ 57. Jeremy **Hill**	CIN	6
☐58. Zach **Zenner**	DET	7
☐59. Dion **Lewis**	NE	9
☐60. Donnel **Pumphrey**	PHI	10
☐ 61. Jeremy **McNichols**	TB	11
☐62. T.J. **Yeldon**	JAC	8
☐63. Jamaal **Williams**	GB	8
☐64. Tyler **Ervin**	HOU	7
☐65. Jonathan **Stewart**	CAR	11
☐66. Terrance **West**	BAL	10
☐ 67. Kenyan **Drake**	MIA	11
☐68. Tarik **Cohen**	CHI	9
☐69. D'Onta **Foreman**	HOU	7
☐70. Wayne **Gallman**	NYG	8
☐ 71. T.J. **Logan**	ARI	8
☐72. Robert **Turbin**	IND	11
☐73. Lance **Dunbar**	LAR	8
☐74. Jacquizz **Rodgers**	TB	11
☐75. James **Conner**	PIT	9
☐76. Thomas **Rawls**	SEA	6
☐ 77. Andre **Ellington**	ARI	8
☐78. Alfred **Morris**	DAL	6
☐79. Chris **Ivory**	JAC	8
☐80. Jerick **McKinnon**	MIN	9

DAVID JOHNSON

EZEKIEL ELLIOTT

Aaron: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Johnson: W. E. Smith III; Elliott: Layne Murdoch; Tucker: Peter Brouillet

WIDE RECEIVERS

WIDE RECEIVERS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. Antonio **Brown**	PIT	9
☐ 2. Odell **Beckham Jr.**	NYG	8
☐ 3. Julio **Jones**	ATL	5
☐ 4. Mike **Evans**	TB	11
☐ 5. Jordy **Nelson**	GB	8
☐ 6. A.J. **Green**	CIN	6
☐ 7. Dez **Bryant**	DAL	6
☐ 8. Michael **Thomas**	NO	5
☐ 9. T.Y. **Hilton**	IND	11
☐10. Demaryius **Thomas**	DEN	5
☐ 11. Golden **Tate**	DET	7
☐12. Brandin **Cooks**	NE	9
☐13. Amari **Cooper**	OAK	10
☐14. Doug **Baldwin**	SEA	6
☐15. Keenan **Allen**	LAC	9
☐16. DeAndre **Hopkins**	HOU	7
☐ 17. Allen **Robinson**	JAC	8
☐18. Julian **Edelman**	NE	9
☐19. Michael **Crabtree**	OAK	10
☐20. Sammy **Watkins**	BUF	6
☐ 21. Brandon **Marshall**	NYG	8
☐22. Martavis **Bryant**	PIT	9
☐23. Jarvis **Landry**	MIA	11
☐24. Larry **Fitzgerald**	ARI	8
☐25. Alshon **Jeffery**	PHI	10
☐26. Davante **Adams**	GB	8
☐ 27. Kelvin **Benjamin**	CAR	11
☐28. Pierre **Garçon**	SF	11
☐29. Emmanuel **Sanders**	DEN	5
☐30. DeSean **Jackson**	TB	11
☐ 31. Donte **Moncrief**	IND	11
☐32. Corey **Coleman**	CLE	9
☐33. Willie **Snead**	NO	5
☐34. Jeremy **Maclin**	KC	10
☐35. Mike **Wallace**	BAL	10
☐36. Stefon **Diggs**	MIN	9
☐ 37. Tyrell **Williams**	LAC	9
☐38. Jordan **Matthews**	PHI	10
☐39. John **Brown**	ARI	8
☐40. Jamison **Crowder**	WAS	5
☐41. DeVante **Parker**	MIA	11
☐42. Ted **Ginn Jr.**	NO	5
☐43. Randall **Cobb**	GB	8
☐44. Rishard **Matthews**	TEN	8
☐45. Tyreek **Hill**	KC	10
☐46. Kevin **White**	CHI	9
☐47. Kenny **Britt**	CLE	9
☐48. Adam **Thielen**	MIN	9
☐49. Quincy **Enunwa**	NYJ	11
☐50. Cameron **Meredith**	CHI	9
☐ 51. Corey **Davis**	TEN	8
☐52. Kenny **Stills**	MIA	11
☐53. Terrelle **Pryor**	WAS	5
☐54. Eric **Decker**	NYJ	11
☐55. Marvin **Jones**	DET	7
☐56. Tyler **Lockett**	SEA	6
☐ 57. Breshad **Perriman**	BAL	10
☐58. Cole **Beasley**	DAL	6
☐59. Allen **Hurns**	JAC	8
☐60. Taylor **Gabriel**	ATL	5
☐ 61. Will **Fuller**	HOU	7
☐62. Robby **Anderson**	NYJ	11
☐63. Sterling **Shepard**	NYG	8
☐64. Tavon **Austin**	LAR	8
☐65. Zay **Jones**	BUF	6
☐66. J.J. **Nelson**	CAR	11
☐ 67. Marqise **Lee**	JAC	8
☐68. Josh **Doctson**	WAS	5
☐69. John **Ross**	CIN	6
☐70. Devin **Funchess**	CAR	11
☐ 71. Robert **Woods**	LAR	8
☐72. Terrance **Williams**	DAL	6
☐73. Torrey **Smith**	PHI	10
☐74. Mohamed **Sanu**	ATL	5
☐75. Mike **Williams**	LAC	9
☐76. Laquon **Treadwell**	MIN	9
☐ 77. Curtis **Samuel**	CAR	11
☐78. Paul **Richardson**	SEA	6
☐79. Marquise **Goodwin**	SF	11
☐80. Cordarrelle **Patterson**	OAK	10
☐ 81. Brandon **Coleman**	NO	5
☐82. Taywan **Taylor**	TEN	8
☐83. Jermaine **Kearse**	SEA	6
☐84. Kamar **Aiken**	IND	11
☐85. Tyler **Boyd**	CIN	6
☐86. Travis **Benjamin**	LAC	9
☐ 87. Chris **Hogan**	NE	9
☐88. Chris **Conley**	KC	10
☐89. Malcolm **Mitchell**	NE	9
☐90. Kenny **Golladay**	DET	7

KICKERS

KICKERS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. Justin **Tucker**	BAL	10
☐ 2. Stephen **Gostkowski**	NE	9
☐ 3. Dan **Bailey**	DAL	6
☐ 4. Dustin **Hopkins**	WAS	5
☐ 5. Matt **Bryant**	ATL	5
☐ 6. Cairo **Santos**	KC	10
☐ 7. Adam **Vinatieri**	IND	11
☐ 8. Mason **Crosby**	GB	8
☐ 9. Caleb **Sturgis**	PHI	10
☐10. Josh **Lambo**	LAC	9
☐ 11. Sebastian **Janikowski**	OAK	10
☐12. Matt **Prater**	DET	7
☐13. Wil **Lutz**	NO	5
☐14. Stephen **Hauschka**	BUF	6
☐15. Nick **Novak**	HOU	7
☐16. Ryan **Succop**	TEN	8
☐ 17. Brandon **McManus**	DEN	5
☐18. Jason **Mayers**	JAC	8
☐19. Roberto **Aguayo**	TB	11
☐20. Phil **Dawson**	ARI	8
☐ 21. Blair **Walsh**	SEA	6
☐22. Chris **Boswell**	PIT	9
☐23. Andrew **Franks**	MIA	11
☐24. Kai **Forbath**	MIN	9
☐25. Robbie **Gould**	SF	11
☐26. Greg **Zuerlein**	LAR	8
☐ 27. Jake **Elliott**	CIN	6
☐28. Harrison **Butker**	CAR	11
☐29. Zane **Gonzalez**	CLE	9
☐30. Connor **Barth**	CHI	9
☐ 31. Chandler **Catanzaro**	NYJ	11
☐32. Aldrick **Rosas**	NYG	8

TIGHT ENDS

TIGHT ENDS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. Rob **Gronkowski**	NE	9
☐ 2. Jordan **Reed**	WAS	5
☐ 3. Greg **Olsen**	CAR	11
☐ 4. Travis **Kelce**	KC	10
☐ 5. Delanie **Walker**	TEN	8
☐ 6. Jimmy **Graham**	SEA	6
☐ 7. Eric **Ebron**	DET	7
☐ 8. Hunter **Henry**	LAC	9
☐ 9. Austin **Hooper**	ATL	5
☐10. Kyle **Rudolph**	MIN	9
☐ 11. Zach **Ertz**	PHI	10
☐12. Jason **Witten**	DAL	6
☐13. Martellus **Bennett**	GB	8
☐14. Tyler **Eifert**	CIN	6
☐15. O.J. **Howard**	TB	11
☐16. Charles **Clay**	BUF	6
☐ 17. Jack **Doyle**	IND	11
☐18. Ladarius **Green**	PIT	9
☐19. Coby **Fleener**	NO	5
☐20. Evan **Engram**	NYG	8
☐ 21. C.J. **Fiedorowicz**	HOU	7
☐22. David **Njoku**	CLE	9
☐23. Jared **Cook**	OAK	10
☐24. Dion **Sims**	CHI	9
☐25. Vance **McDonald**	SF	11
☐26. Julius **Thomas**	MIA	11
☐ 27. Jermaine **Gresham**	ARI	8
☐28. Antonio **Gates**	LAC	9
☐29. Dwayne **Allen**	NE	9
☐30. Benjamin **Watson**	BAL	10
☐ 31. Ryan **Griffin**	HOU	7
☐32. Erik **Swoope**	IND	11
☐33. A.J. **Derby**	DEN	5
☐34. Tyler **Higbee**	LAR	8
☐35. Dennis **Pitta**	BAL	10
☐36. Jordan **Leggett**	NYJ	11
☐ 37. Mychal **Rivera**	JAC	8
☐38. Clive **Walford**	OAK	10
☐39. Gerald **Everett**	LAR	8
☐40. Josh **Hill**	NO	5
☐41. Seth **DeValve**	CLE	9
☐42. Trey **Burton**	PHI	10
☐43. Vernon **Davis**	WAS	5
☐44. Marcedes **Lewis**	JAC	8
☐45. Adam **Shaheen**	CHI	9
☐46. Zach **Miller**	CHI	9
☐ 47. Virgil **Green**	DEN	5
☐48. Jesse **James**	PIT	9
☐49. Lance **Kendricks**	GB	8
☐50. Cameron **Brate**	TB	11

DEFENSE/ SPECIAL TEAMS

DEFENSE/ SPECIAL TEAMS	BYE
☐ 1. **Arizona**	8
☐ 2. **Kansas City**	10
☐ 3. **L.A. Chargers**	9
☐ 4. **Denver**	5
☐ 5. **N.Y. Giants**	8
☐ 6. **Minnesota**	9
☐ 7. **Seattle**	6
☐ 8. **Houston**	7
☐ 9. **Carolina**	11
☐ 10. **Philadelphia**	10
☐ 11. **Atlanta**	5
☐ 12. **Tampa Bay**	11
☐ 13. **Baltimore**	10
☐ 14. **New England**	9
☐ 15. **Jacksonville**	8
☐ 16. **Miami**	11
☐ 17. **L.A. Rams**	8
☐ 18. **Buffalo**	6
☐ 19. **Cincinnati**	6
☐ 20. **Green Bay**	8
☐ 21. **Pittsburgh**	9
☐ 22. **Oakland**	10
☐ 23. **Washington**	5
☐ 24. **New Orleans**	5
☐ 25. **San Francisco**	11
☐ 26. **Tennessee**	8
☐ 27. **Detroit**	7
☐ 28. **Chicago**	9
☐ 29. **Dallas**	6
☐ 30. **N.Y. Jets**	11
☐ 31. **Indianapolis**	11
☐ 32. **Cleveland**	9

JUSTIN TUCKER

TOP 280 FANTASY BIG BOARD

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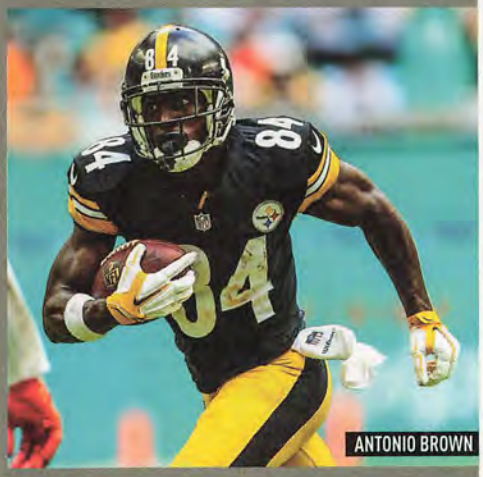
ANTONIO BROWN

JULIAN EDELMAN

RUSSELL WILSON

Rank	Player, Team	Pos	Bye
☐ 1.	David **Johnson**, ARI	RB	8
☐ 2.	Le'Veon **Bell**, PIT	RB	9
☐ 3.	Antonio **Brown**, PIT	WR	9
☐ 4.	Ezekiel **Elliott**, DAL	RB	6
☐ 5.	Odell **Beckham Jr.**, NYG	WR	8
☐ 6.	Julio **Jones**, ATL	WR	5
☐ 7.	Mike **Evans**, TB	WR	11
☐ 8.	Jordy **Nelson**, GB	WR	8
☐ 9.	A.J. **Green**, CIN	WR	6
☐ 10.	Dez **Bryant**, DAL	WR	6
☐ 11.	Melvin **Gordon**, LAC	RB	9
☐ 12.	Devonta **Freeman**, ATL	RB	5
☐ 13.	LeSean **McCoy**, BUF	RB	6
☐ 14.	Michael **Thomas**, NO	WR	5
☐ 15.	T.Y. **Hilton**, IND	WR	11
☐ 16.	Rob **Gronkowski**, NE	TE	9
☐ 17.	Jordan **Howard**, CHI	RB	9
☐ 18.	Jay **Ajayi**, MIA	RB	11
☐ 19.	DeMarco **Murray**, TEN	RB	8
☐ 20.	Lamar **Miller**, HOU	RB	7
☐ 21.	Todd **Gurley**, LAR	RB	8
☐ 22.	Demaryius **Thomas**, DEN	WR	5
☐ 23.	Golden **Tate**, DET	WR	7
☐ 24.	Brandin **Cooks**, NE	WR	9
☐ 25.	Amari **Cooper**, OAK	WR	10
☐ 26.	Doug **Baldwin**, SEA	WR	6
☐ 27.	Keenan **Allen**, LAC	WR	9
☐ 28.	DeAndre **Hopkins**, HOU	WR	7
☐ 29.	Allen **Robinson**, JAC	WR	8
☐ 30.	Carlos **Hyde**, SF	RB	11
☐ 31.	Leonard **Fournette**, JAC	RB	8
☐ 32.	Christian **McCaffrey**, CAR	RB	11
☐ 33.	Julian **Edelman**, NE	WR	9
☐ 34.	Michael **Crabtree**, OAK	WR	10
☐ 35.	Sammy **Watkins**, BUF	WR	6
☐ 36.	Aaron **Rodgers**, GB	QB	8
☐ 37.	Tom **Brady**, NE	QB	9
☐ 38.	Drew **Brees**, NO	QB	5
☐ 39.	Brandon **Marshall**, NYG	WR	8
☐ 40.	Martavis **Bryant**, PIT	WR	9
☐ 41.	Jarvis **Landry**, MIA	WR	11
☐ 42.	Larry **Fitzgerald**, ARI	WR	8
☐ 43.	Alshon **Jeffery**, PHI	WR	10
☐ 44.	Jordan **Reed**, WAS	TE	5
☐ 45.	Ty **Montgomery**, GB	RB	8
☐ 46.	Isaiah **Crowell**, CLE	RB	9
☐ 47.	Mark **Ingram**, NO	RB	5
☐ 48.	Tevin **Coleman**, ATL	RB	5
☐ 49.	Davante **Adams**, GB	WR	8
☐ 50.	Andrew **Luck**, IND	QB	11
☐ 51.	Paul **Perkins**, NYG	RB	8
☐ 52.	Dalvin **Cook**, MIN	RB	9
☐ 53.	Greg **Olsen**, CAR	TE	11
☐ 54.	Travis **Kelce**, KC	TE	10
☐ 55.	Kelvin **Benjamin**, CAR	WR	11
☐ 56.	Pierre **Garçon**, SF	WR	11
☐ 57.	Emmanuel **Sanders**, DEN	WR	5
☐ 58.	Russell **Wilson**, SEA	QB	6
☐ 59.	DeSean **Jackson**, TB	WR	11
☐ 60.	Donte **Moncrief**, IND	WR	11
☐ 61.	Corey **Coleman**, CLE	WR	9
☐ 62.	Willie **Snead**, NO	WR	5
☐ 63.	Delanie **Walker**, TEN	TE	8
☐ 64.	Jimmy **Graham**, SEA	TE	6
☐ 65.	Bilal **Powell**, NYJ	RB	11
☐ 66.	C.J. **Anderson**, DEN	RB	5
☐ 67.	Spencer **Ware**, KC	RB	10
☐ 68.	Danny **Woodhead**, BAL	RB	10
☐ 69.	Philip **Rivers**, LAC	QB	9
☐ 70.	Eric **Ebron**, DET	TE	7

Rank	Player, Team	Pos	Bye
☐ 71.	Jeremy **Maclin**, KC	WR	10
☐ 72.	Mike **Wallace**, BAL	WR	10
☐ 73.	Stefon **Diggs**, MIN	WR	9
☐ 74.	Theo **Riddick**, DET	RB	7
☐ 75.	Giovani **Bernard**, CIN	RB	6
☐ 76.	Kirk **Cousins**, WAS	QB	5
☐ 77.	Dak **Prescott**, DAL	QB	6
☐ 78.	Jameis **Winston**, TB	QB	11
☐ 79.	Tyrell **Williams**, LAC	WR	9
☐ 80.	Jordan **Matthews**, PHI	WR	10
☐ 81.	John **Brown**, ARI	WR	8
☐ 82.	Jamison **Crowder**, WAS	WR	5
☐ 83.	Eddie **Lacy**, SEA	RB	6
☐ 84.	Frank **Gore**, IND	RB	11
☐ 85.	Mike **Gillislee**, NE	RB	9
☐ 86.	Marshawn **Lynch**, OAK	RB	10
☐ 87.	Kenneth **Dixon**, BAL	RB	10
☐ 88	Matt **Forté**, NYJ	RB	11
☐ 89.	Hunter **Henry**, LAC	TE	9
☐ 90.	Austin **Hooper**, ATL	TE	5
☐ 91.	Kyle **Rudolph**, MIN	TE	9
☐ 92.	Zach **Ertz**, PHI	TE	10
☐ 93.	DeVante **Parker**, MIA	WR	11
☐ 94.	Ted **Ginn Jr.**, NO	WR	5
☐ 95.	Randall **Cobb**, GB	WR	8
☐ 96.	Rishard **Matthews**, TEN	WR	8
☐ 97.	Tyreek **Hill**, KC	WR	10
☐ 98.	Kevin **White**, CHI	WR	9
☐ 99.	Samaje **Perine**, WAS	RB	5
☐ 100.	C.J. **Prosise**, SEA	RB	6
☐ 101.	Ameer **Abdullah**, DET	RB	7
☐ 102.	Joe **Mixon**, CIN	RB	6
☐ 103.	Kareem **Hunt**, KC	RB	10
☐ 104.	Doug **Martin**, TB	RB	11
☐ 105.	Matthew **Stafford**, DET	QB	7
☐ 106.	Cam **Newton**, CAR	QB	11
☐ 107.	Marcus **Mariota**, TEN	QB	8
☐ 108.	Kenny **Britt**, CLE	WR	9
☐ 109.	Adam **Thielen**, MIN	WR	9
☐ 110.	Quincy **Enunwa**, NYJ	WR	11
☐ 111.	Cameron **Meredith**, CHI	WR	9
☐ 112.	Jason **Witten**, DAL	TE	6
☐ 113.	Martellus **Bennett**, GB	TE	8
☐ 114.	Tyler **Eifert**, CIN	TE	6
☐ 115.	O.J. **Howard**, TB	TE	11
☐ 116.	Ben **Roethlisberger**, PIT	QB	9
☐ 117.	Matt **Ryan**, ATL	QB	5
☐ 118.	Adrian **Peterson**, NO	RB	5
☐ 119.	Derrick **Henry**, TEN	RB	8
☐ 120.	Corey **Davis**, TEN	WR	8
☐ 121.	Rex **Burkhead**, NE	RB	9
☐ 122.	Duke **Johnson Jr.**, CLE	RB	9
☐ 123.	Kenny **Stills**, MIA	WR	11
☐ 124.	Terrelle **Pryor Sr.**, WAS	WR	5
☐ 125.	Eric **Decker**, NYJ	WR	11
☐ 126.	Marvin **Jones**, DET	WR	7
☐ 127.	Tyler **Lockett**, SEA	WR	6
☐ 128.	Blake **Bortles**, JAC	QB	8
☐ 129.	Breshad **Perriman**, BAL	WR	10
☐ 130.	Cole **Beasley**, DAL	WR	6
☐ 131.	Allen **Hurns**, JAC	WR	8
☐ 132.	Taylor **Gabriel**, ATL	WR	5
☐ 133.	Will **Fuller V**, HOU	WR	7
☐ 134.	Charles **Clay**, BUF	TE	6
☐ 135.	Jack **Doyle**, IND	TE	11
☐ 136.	Ladarius **Green**, PIT	TE	9
☐ 137.	Coby **Fleener**, NO	TE	5
☐ 138.	Darren **Sproles**, PHI	RB	10
☐ 139.	James **White**, NE	RB	9
☐ 140.	Latavius **Murray**, MIN	RB	9

Brown, Yeldon: W. E. Smith III; Edelman: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Wilson, Tannehill: Peter Brouillet; Dalton: Gary Hershorn

ANDY DALTON

RYAN TANNEHILL

T.J. YELDON

Rank	Player, Team	Pos	Bye
☐ 141.	**Cardinals**	DST	8
☐ 142.	**Chiefs**	DST	10
☐ 143.	Andy **Dalton**, CIN	QB	6
☐ 144.	Tyrod **Taylor**, BUF	QB	6
☐ 145.	Eli **Manning**, NYG	QB	8
☐ 146.	Derek **Carr**, OAK	QB	10
☐ 147.	Jamaal **Charles**, DEN	RB	5
☐ 148.	Wendell **Smallwood**, PHI	RB	10
☐ 149.	Robby **Anderson**, NYJ	WR	11
☐ 150.	Sterling **Shepard**, NYG	WR	8
☐ 151.	Tavon **Austin**, LAR	WR	8
☐ 152.	Zay **Jones**, BUF	WR	6
☐ 153.	J.J. **Nelson**, ARI	WR	8
☐ 154.	Marqise **Lee**, JAC	WR	8
☐ 155.	Josh **Doctson**, WAS	WR	5
☐ 156.	John **Ross**, CIN	WR	6
☐ 157.	Marlon **Mack**, IND	RB	11
☐ 158.	Ryan **Mathews**, PHI	RB	10
☐ 159.	Evan **Engram**, NYG	TE	8
☐ 160.	C.J. **Fiedorowicz**, HOU	TE	7
☐ 161.	David **Njoku**, CLE	TE	9
☐ 162.	Jared **Cook**, OAK	TE	10
☐ 163.	Carson **Wentz**, PHI	QB	10
☐ 164.	Alex **Smith**, KC	QB	10
☐ 165.	Ryan **Tannehill**, MIA	QB	11
☐ 166.	Carson **Palmer**, ARI	QB	8
☐ 167.	Jalen **Richard**, OAK	RB	10
☐ 168.	DeAndre **Washington**, OAK	RB	10
☐ 169.	Chris **Thompson**, WAS	RB	5
☐ 170.	Shane **Vereen**, NYG	RB	8
☐ 171.	Rob **Kelley**, WAS	RB	5
☐ 172.	Jonathan **Williams**, BUF	RB	6
☐ 173.	Charles **Sims**, TB	RB	11
☐ 174.	**Chargers**	DST	9
☐ 175.	**Broncos**	DST	5
☐ 176.	**Giants**	DST	8
☐ 177.	Jeremy **Hill**, CIN	RB	6
☐ 178.	Zach **Zenner**, DET	RB	7
☐ 179.	Devin **Funchess**, CAR	WR	11
☐ 180.	Robert **Woods**, LAR	WR	8
☐ 181.	Terrance **Williams**, DAL	WR	6
☐ 182.	Torrey **Smith**, PHI	WR	10
☐ 183.	Mohamed **Sanu**, ATL	WR	5
☐ 184.	Mike **Williams**, LAC	WR	9
☐ 185.	Dion **Lewis**, NE	RB	9
☐ 186.	Donnel **Pumphrey**, PHI	RB	10
☐ 187.	Jeremy **McNichols**, TB	RB	11
☐ 188.	T.J. **Yeldon**, JAC	RB	8
☐ 189.	Jamaal **Williams**, GB	RB	8
☐ 190.	Tyler **Ervin**, HOU	RB	7
☐ 191.	Jonathan **Stewart**, CAR	RB	11
☐ 192.	Laquon **Treadwell**, MIN	WR	9
☐ 193.	Curtis **Samuel**, CAR	WR	11
☐ 194.	Paul **Richardson**, SEA	WR	6
☐ 195.	Marquise **Goodwin**, SF	WR	11
☐ 196.	Cordarrelle **Patterson**, OAK	WR	10
☐ 197.	Brandon **Coleman**, NO	WR	5
☐ 198.	**Vikings**	DST	9
☐ 199.	**Seahawks**	DST	6
☐ 200.	**Texans**	DST	7
☐ 201.	**Panthers**	DST	11
☐ 202.	Terrance **West**, BAL	RB	10
☐ 203.	Kenyan **Drake**, MIA	RB	11
☐ 204.	Tarik **Cohen**, CHI	RB	9
☐ 205.	D'Onta **Foreman**, HOU	RB	7
☐ 206.	Wayne **Gallman**, NYG	RB	8
☐ 207.	T.J. **Logan**, ARI	RB	8
☐ 208.	Taywan **Taylor**, TEN	WR	8
☐ 209	Jermaine **Kearse**, SEA	WR	6
☐ 210.	Kamar **Aiken**, IND	WR	11

Rank	Player, Team	Pos	Bye
☐ 211.	Tyler **Boyd**, CIN	WR	6
☐ 212.	Travis **Benjamin**, LAC	WR	9
☐ 213.	Chris **Hogan**, NE	WR	9
☐ 214.	Chris **Conley**, KC	WR	10
☐ 215.	Malcolm **Mitchell**, NE	WR	9
☐ 216.	Kenny **Golladay**, DET	WR	7
☐ 217.	Robert **Turbin**, IND	RB	11
☐ 218.	Lance **Dunbar**, LAR	RB	8
☐ 219.	Jacquizz **Rodgers**, TB	RB	11
☐ 220.	James **Conner**, PIT	RB	9
☐ 221.	Thomas **Rawls**, SEA	RB	6
☐ 222.	Andre **Ellington**, ARI	RB	8
☐ 223.	Alfred **Morris**, DAL	RB	6
☐ 224.	Chris **Ivory**, JAC	RB	8
☐ 225.	Jerick **McKinnon**, MIN	RB	9
☐ 226.	**Eagles**	DST	10
☐ 227.	**Falcons**	DST	5
☐ 228.	**Buccaneers**	DST	11
☐ 229.	Joe **Flacco**, BAL	QB	10
☐ 230.	Sam **Bradford**, MIN	QB	9
☐ 231.	Justin **Tucker**, BAL	K	10
☐ 232.	Stephen **Gostkowski**, NE	K	9
☐ 233.	Dan **Bailey**, DAL	K	6
☐ 234.	Dustin **Hopkins**, WAS	K	5
☐ 235.	Matt **Bryant**, ATL	K	5
☐ 236.	Cairo **Santos**, KC	K	10
☐ 237.	Adam **Vinatieri**, IND	K	11
☐ 238.	Mason **Crosby**, GB	K	8
☐ 239.	Caleb **Sturgis**, PHI	K	10
☐ 240.	Josh **Lambo**, LAC	K	9
☐ 241.	Sebastian **Janikowski**, OAK	K	10
☐ 242.	Matt **Prater**, DET	K	7
☐ 243.	Brian **Hoyer**, SF	QB	11
☐ 244.	Jared **Goff**, LAR	QB	8
☐ 245.	Josh **McCown**, NYJ	QB	11
☐ 246.	Trevor **Siemian**, DEN	QB	5
☐ 247.	Paxton **Lynch**, DEN	QB	5
☐ 248.	Dion **Sims**, CHI	TE	9
☐ 249.	Vance **McDonald**, SF	TE	11
☐ 250.	Julius **Thomas**, MIA	TE	11
☐ 251.	Jermaine **Gresham**, ARI	TE	8
☐ 252.	Antonio **Gates**, LAC	TE	9
☐ 253.	Dwayne **Allen**, NE	TE	9
☐ 254.	**Ravens**	DST	10
☐ 255.	**Patriots**	DST	9
☐ 256.	**Jaguars**	DST	8
☐ 257.	**Dolphins**	DST	11
☐ 258.	**Rams**	DST	8
☐ 259.	Benjamin **Watson**, BAL	TE	10
☐ 260.	Ryan **Griffin**, HOU	TE	7
☐ 261.	Erik **Swoope**, IND	TE	11
☐ 262.	A.J. **Derby**, DEN	TE	5
☐ 263.	Tyler **Higbee**, LAR	TE	8
☐ 264.	Dennis **Pitta**, BAL	TE	10
☐ 265.	Jordan **Leggett**, NYJ	TE	11
☐ 266.	Mychal **Rivera**, JAC	TE	8
☐ 267.	Clive **Walford**, OAK	TE	10
☐ 268.	Gerald **Everett**, LAR	TE	8
☐ 269.	Josh **Hill**, NO	TE	5
☐ 270.	Braxton **Miller**, HOU	WR	7
☐ 271.	Phillip **Dorsett**, IND	WR	11
☐ 272.	Tom **Savage**, HOU	QB	7
☐ 273.	Mike **Glennon**, CHI	QB	9
☐ 274.	Cody **Kessler**, CLE	QB	9
☐ 275.	Mitchell **Trubisky**, CHI	QB	9
☐ 276.	Deshaun **Watson**, HOU	QB	7
☐ 277.	**Bills**	DST	6
☐ 278.	**Bengals**	DST	6
☐ 279.	**Packers**	DST	8
☐ 280.	**Steelers**	DST	9

TOP 240 FANTASY WITH IDPS

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DAVID JOHNSON

LE'VEON BELL

Rank	Player, Team	Pos	Bye
☐ 1.	David **Johnson**, ARI	RB	8
☐ 2.	Le'Veon **Bell**, PIT	RB	9
☐ 3.	Antonio **Brown**, PIT	WR	9
☐ 4.	Ezekiel **Elliott**, DAL	RB	6
☐ 5.	Odell **Beckham Jr.**, NYG	WR	8
☐ 6.	Julio **Jones**, ATL	WR	5
☐ 7.	Mike **Evans**, TB	WR	11
☐ 8.	Jordy **Nelson**, GB	WR	8
☐ 9.	A.J. **Green**, CIN	WR	6
☐ 10.	Dez **Bryant**, DAL	WR	6
☐ 11.	Melvin **Gordon**, LAC	RB	9
☐ 12.	Devonta **Freeman**, ATL	RB	5
☐ 13.	LeSean **McCoy**, BUF	RB	6
☐ 14.	Michael **Thomas**, NO	WR	5
☐ 15.	T.Y. **Hilton**, IND	WR	11
☐ 16.	Rob **Gronkowski**, NE	TE	9
☐ 17.	Jordan **Howard**, CHI	RB	9
☐ 18.	Jay **Ajayi**, MIA	RB	11
☐ 19.	DeMarco **Murray**, TEN	RB	8
☐ 20.	Lamar **Miller**, HOU	RB	7
☐ 21.	Todd **Gurley**, LAR	RB	8
☐ 22.	Demaryius **Thomas**, DEN	WR	5
☐ 23.	Golden **Tate**, DET	WR	7
☐ 24.	Brandin **Cooks**, NE	WR	9
☐ 25.	Amari **Cooper**, OAK	WR	10
☐ 26.	Doug **Baldwin**, SEA	WR	6
☐ 27.	Keenan **Allen**, LAC	WR	9
☐ 28.	DeAndre **Hopkins**, HOU	WR	7
☐ 29.	Allen **Robinson**, JAC	WR	8
☐ 30.	Carlos **Hyde**, SF	RB	11
☐ 31.	Leonard **Fournette**, JAC	RB	8
☐ 32.	Christian **McCaffrey**, CAR	RB	11
☐ 33.	Julian **Edelman**, NE	WR	9
☐ 34.	Michael **Crabtree**, OAK	WR	10
☐ 35.	Sammy **Watkins**, BUF	WR	6
☐ 36.	Aaron **Rodgers**, GB	QB	8
☐ 37.	Tom **Brady**, NE	QB	9
☐ 38.	Drew **Brees**, NO	QB	5
☐ 39.	Brandon **Marshall**, NYG	WR	8
☐ 40.	Martavis **Bryant**, PIT	WR	9
☐ 41.	Jarvis **Landry**, MIA	WR	11
☐ 42.	Larry **Fitzgerald**, ARI	WR	8
☐ 43.	Alshon **Jeffery**, PHI	WR	10
☐ 44.	Jordan **Reed**, WAS	TE	5
☐ 45.	Ty **Montgomery**, GB	RB	8
☐ 46.	Isaiah **Crowell**, CLE	RB	9
☐ 47.	Mark **Ingram**, NO	RB	5
☐ 48.	Tevin **Coleman**, ATL	RB	5
☐ 49.	Davante **Adams**, GB	WR	8
☐ 50.	Andrew **Luck**, IND	QB	11
☐ 51.	Paul **Perkins**, NYG	RB	8
☐ 52.	Dalvin **Cook**, MIN	RB	9
☐ 53.	Greg **Olsen**, CAR	TE	11
☐ 54.	Travis **Kelce**, KC	TE	10
☐ 55.	Khalil **Mack**, OAK	DL	10
☐ 56.	J.J. **Watt**, HOU	DL	7
☐ 57.	Luke **Kuechly**, CAR	LB	11
☐ 58.	Kelvin **Benjamin**, CAR	WR	11
☐ 59.	Pierre **Garçon**, SF	WR	11
☐ 60.	Emmanuel **Sanders**, DEN	WR	5

Rank	Player, Team	Pos	Bye
☐ 61.	Russell **Wilson**, SEA	QB	6
☐ 62.	DeSean **Jackson**, TB	WR	11
☐ 63	Donte **Moncrief**, IND	WR	11
☐ 64.	Corey **Coleman**, CLE	WR	9
☐ 65.	Willie **Snead**, NO	WR	5
☐ 66	Delanie **Walker**, TEN	TE	8
☐ 67	Jimmy **Graham**, SEA	TE	6
☐ 68.	Bilal **Powell**, NYJ	RB	11
☐ 69.	C.J. **Anderson**, DEN	RB	5
☐ 70.	Spencer **Ware**, KC	RB	10
☐ 71.	Danny **Woodhead**, BAL	RB	10
☐ 72.	Philip **Rivers**, LAC	QB	9
☐ 73.	Eric **Ebron**, DET	TE	7
☐ 74.	Jeremy **Maclin**, KC	WR	10
☐ 75.	Mike **Wallace**, BAL	WR	10
☐ 76.	Stefon **Diggs**, MIN	WR	9
☐ 77.	Theo **Riddick**, DET	RB	7
☐ 78.	Giovani **Bernard**, CIN	RB	6
☐ 79.	Kirk **Cousins**, WAS	QB	5
☐ 80.	Dak **Prescott**, DAL	QB	6
☐ 81.	Jameis **Winston**, TB	QB	11
☐ 82.	Bobby **Wagner**, SEA	LB	6
☐ 83.	Alec **Ogletree**, LAR	LB	8
☐ 84.	Kwon **Alexander**, TB	LB	11
☐ 85.	Tyrell **Williams**, LAC	WR	9
☐ 86.	Jordan **Matthews**, PHI	WR	10
☐ 87.	John **Brown**, ARI	WR	8
☐ 88.	Jamison **Crowder**, WAS	WR	5
☐ 89.	Eddie **Lacy**, SEA	RB	6
☐ 90.	Frank **Gore**, IND	RB	11
☐ 91.	Mike **Gillislee**, NE	RB	9
☐ 92.	Marshawn **Lynch**, OAK	RB	10
☐ 93.	NaVorro **Bowman**, SF	LB	11
☐ 94.	Aaron **Donald**, LAR	DL	8
☐ 95.	Vontaze **Burfict**, CIN	LB	6
☐ 96.	Lavonte **David**, TB	LB	11
☐ 97.	Kenneth **Dixon**, BAL	RB	10
☐ 98.	Matt **Forté**, NYJ	RB	11
☐ 99.	Hunter **Henry**, LAC	TE	9
☐ 100.	Jamie **Collins**, CLE	LB	9
☐ 101.	Landon **Collins**, NYG	DB	8
☐ 102.	Reshad **Jones**, MIA	DB	11
☐ 103.	Calais **Campbell**, JAC	DL	8
☐ 104.	Jason **Pierre-Paul**, NYG	DL	8
☐ 105.	Joey **Bosa**, LAC	DL	9
☐ 106.	Austin **Hooper**, ATL	TE	5
☐ 107.	Kyle **Rudolph**, MIN	TE	9
☐ 108.	Zach **Ertz**, PHI	TE	10
☐ 109.	DeVante **Parker**, MIA	WR	11
☐ 110.	C.J. **Mosley**, BAL	LB	10
☐ 111.	Sean **Lee**, DAL	LB	6
☐ 112.	Telvin **Smith**, JAC	LB	8
☐ 113.	Ryan **Shazier**, PIT	LB	9
☐ 114.	Ted **Ginn Jr.**, NO	WR	5
☐ 115.	Randall **Cobb**, GB	WR	8
☐ 116.	Rishard **Matthews**, TEN	WR	8
☐ 117.	Tyreek **Hill**, KC	WR	10
☐ 118.	Kevin **White**, CHI	WR	9
☐ 119.	Samaje **Perine**, WAS	RB	5
☐ 120.	C.J. **Prosise**, SEA	RB	6

Johnson, Bell, Bortles: W. E. Smith III; Martin: Tim Umphrey; Ryan: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

TOP 65 IDPS

RK	PLAYER	POS	BYE
1.	Khalil **Mack**, OAK	DL	10
2.	J.J. **Watt**, HOU	DL	7
3.	Luke **Kuechly**, CAR	LB	11
4.	Bobby **Wagner**, SEA	LB	6
5.	Alec **Ogletree**, LAR	LB	8
6.	Kwon **Alexander**, TB	LB	11
7.	NaVorro **Bowman**, SF	LB	11
8.	Aaron **Donald**, LAR	DL	8
9.	Vontaze **Burfict**, CIN	LB	6
10.	Lavonte **David**, TB	LB	11
11.	Jamie **Collins**, CLE	LB	9
12.	Landon **Collins**, NYG	DB	8
13.	Reshad **Jones**, MIA	DB	11
14.	Calais **Campbell**, JAC	DL	8
15.	Jason **Pierre-Paul**, NYG	DL	8
16.	Joey **Bosa**, LAC	DL	9
17.	C.J. **Mosley**, BAL	LB	10
18.	Sean **Lee**, DAL	LB	6
19.	Telvin **Smith**, JAC	LB	8
20.	Ryan **Shazier**, PIT	LB	9
21.	Danielle **Hunter**, MIN	DL	9
22.	Leonard **Williams**, NYJ	DL	11
23.	Everson **Griffen**, MIN	DL	9
24.	Olivier **Vernon**, NYG	DL	8
25.	Cameron **Jordan**, NO	DL	5
26.	DeForest **Buckner**, SF	DL	11
27.	Ndamukong **Suh**, MIA	DL	11
28.	Ezekiel **Ansah**, DET	DL	7
29.	Carlos **Dunlap**, CIN	DL	6
30.	Muhammad **Wilkerson**, NYJ	DL	11
31.	Fletcher **Cox**, PHI	DL	10
32.	Jerrell **Freeman**, CHI	LB	9

DOUG MARTIN

MATT RYAN

BLAKE BORTLES

Rank	Player, Team	Pos	Bye
☐ 121.	Ameer **Abdullah**, DET	RB	7
☐ 122.	Joe **Mixon**, CIN	RB	6
☐ 123.	Kareem **Hunt**, KC	RB	10
☐ 124.	Doug **Martin**, TB	RB	11
☐ 125.	Matthew **Stafford**, DET	QB	7
☐ 126.	Cam **Newton**, CAR	QB	11
☐ 127.	Marcus **Mariota**, TEN	QB	8
☐ 128.	Kenny **Britt**, CLE	WR	9
☐ 129.	Danielle **Hunter**, MIN	DL	9
☐ 130.	Leonard **Williams**, NYJ	DL	11
☐ 131.	Everson **Griffen**, MIN	DL	9
☐ 132.	Olivier **Vernon**, NYG	DL	8
☐ 133.	Cameron **Jordan**, NO	DL	5
☐ 134.	DeForest **Buckner**, SF	DL	11
☐ 135.	Adam **Thielen**, MIN	WR	9
☐ 136.	Quincy **Enunwa**, NYJ	WR	11
☐ 137.	Cameron **Meredith**, CHI	WR	9
☐ 138.	Jason **Witten**, DAL	TE	6
☐ 139.	Martellus **Bennett**, GB	TE	8
☐ 140.	Tyler **Eifert**, CIN	TE	6
☐ 141.	O.J. **Howard**, TB	TE	11
☐ 142.	Ben **Roethlisberger**, PIT	QB	9
☐ 143.	Matt **Ryan**, ATL	QB	5
☐ 144.	Adrian **Peterson**, NO	RB	5
☐ 145.	Derrick **Henry**, TEN	RB	8
☐ 146.	Corey **Davis**, TEN	WR	8
☐ 147.	Ndamukong **Suh**, MIA	DL	11
☐ 148.	Ezekiel **Ansah**, DET	DL	7
☐ 149.	Carlos **Dunlap**, CIN	DL	6
☐ 150.	Muhammad **Wilkerson**, NYJ	DL	11
☐ 151.	Fletcher **Cox**, PHI	DL	10
☐ 152.	Rex **Burkhead**, NE	RB	9
☐ 153.	Duke **Johnson Jr.**, CLE	RB	9
☐ 154.	Kenny **Stills**, MIA	WR	11
☐ 155.	Terrelle **Pryor Sr.**, WAS	WR	5
☐ 156.	Jerrell **Freeman**, CHI	LB	9
☐ 157.	Benardrick **McKinney**, HOU	LB	7
☐ 158.	Eric **Kendricks**, MIN	LB	9
☐ 159.	Christian **Kirksey**, CLE	LB	9
☐ 160.	Derrick **Johnson**, KC	LB	10
☐ 161.	Jatavis **Brown**, LAC	LB	9
☐ 162.	Eric **Decker**, NYJ	WR	11
☐ 163.	Marvin **Jones**, DET	WR	7
☐ 164.	Tyler **Lockett**, SEA	WR	6
☐ 165.	Blake **Bortles**, JAC	QB	8
☐ 166.	Breshad **Perriman**, BAL	WR	10
☐ 167.	Cole **Beasley**, DAL	WR	6
☐ 168.	Allen **Hurns**, JAC	WR	8
☐ 169.	Taylor **Gabriel**, ATL	WR	5
☐ 170.	Will **Fuller V**, HOU	WR	7
☐ 171.	Charles **Clay**, BUF	TE	6
☐ 172.	Jack **Doyle**, IND	TE	11
☐ 173.	Ladarius **Green**, PIT	TE	9
☐ 174.	Coby **Fleener**, NO	TE	5
☐ 175.	Darren **Sproles**, PHI	RB	10
☐ 176.	James **White**, NE	RB	9
☐ 177.	Latavius **Murray**, MIN	RB	9
☐ 178.	Andy **Dalton**, CIN	QB	6
☐ 179.	Tyrod **Taylor**, BUF	QB	6
☐ 180.	Eli **Manning**, NYG	QB	8

Rank	Player, Team	Pos	Bye
☐ 181.	Derek **Carr**, OAK	QB	10
☐ 182.	Jamaal **Charles**, DEN	RB	5
☐ 183.	Wendell **Smallwood**, PHI	RB	10
☐ 184.	Jarrad **Davis**, DET	LB	7
☐ 185.	Reggie **Ragland**, BUF	LB	6
☐ 186.	Deone **Bucannon**, ARI	LB	8
☐ 187.	Deion **Jones**, ATL	LB	5
☐ 188.	Mark **Barron**, LAR	LB	8
☐ 189.	Lawrence **Timmons**, MIA	LB	11
☐ 190.	K.J. **Wright**, SEA	LB	6
☐ 191.	Myles **Jack**, JAC	LB	8
☐ 192.	Reuben **Foster**, SF	LB	11
☐ 193.	Morgan **Burnett**, GB	DB	8
☐ 194.	Harrison **Smith**, MIN	DB	9
☐ 195.	Keanu **Neal**, ATL	DB	5
☐ 196.	Jamal **Adams**, NYG	DB	8
☐ 197.	Robby **Anderson**, NYJ	WR	11
☐ 198.	Sterling **Shepard**, NYG	WR	8
☐ 199.	Tavon **Austin**, LAR	WR	8
☐ 200.	Zay **Jones**, BUF	WR	6
☐ 201.	J.J. **Nelson**, ARI	WR	8
☐ 202.	Marqise **Lee**, JAC	WR	8
☐ 203.	Josh **Doctson**, WAS	WR	5
☐ 204.	John **Ross**, CIN	WR	6
☐ 205.	Marlon **Mack**, IND	RB	11
☐ 206.	Ryan **Mathews**, PHI	RB	10
☐ 207.	Evan **Engram**, NYG	TE	8
☐ 208.	C.J. **Fiedorowicz**, HOU	TE	7
☐ 209	David **Njoku**, CLE	TE	9
☐ 210.	Jared **Cook**, OAK	TE	10
☐ 211.	Carson **Wentz**, PHI	QB	10
☐ 212.	Alex **Smith**, KC	QB	10
☐ 213.	Ryan **Tannehill**, MIA	QB	11
☐ 214.	Carson **Palmer**, ARI	QB	8
☐ 215.	Jalen **Richard**, OAK	RB	10
☐ 216.	DeAndre **Washington**, OAK	RB	10
☐ 217.	Chris **Thompson**, WAS	RB	5
☐ 218.	Shane **Vereen**, NYG	RB	8
☐ 219.	Rob **Kelley**, WAS	RB	5
☐ 220.	Jonathan **Williams**, BUF	RB	6
☐ 221.	Charles **Sims**, TB	RB	11
☐ 222.	Jeremy **Hill**, CIN	RB	6
☐ 223.	Zach **Zenner**, DET	RB	7
☐ 224.	Devin **Funchess**, CAR	WR	11
☐ 225.	Robert **Woods**, LAR	WR	8
☐ 226.	Terrance **Williams**, DAL	WR	6
☐ 227.	Torrey **Smith**, PHI	WR	10
☐ 228.	Mohamed **Sanu**, ATL	WR	5
☐ 229.	Mike **Williams**, LAC	WR	9
☐ 230.	Justin **Tucker**, BAL	K	10
☐ 231.	Stephen **Gostkowski**, NE	K	9
☐ 232.	Dan **Bailey**, DAL	K	6
☐ 233.	Dustin **Hopkins**, WAS	K	5
☐ 234.	Matt **Bryant**, ATL	K	5
☐ 235.	Cairo **Santos**, KC	K	10
☐ 236.	Adam **Vinatieri**, IND	K	11
☐ 237.	Mason **Crosby**, GB	K	8
☐ 238.	Caleb **Sturgis**, PHI	K	10
☐ 239.	Josh **Lambo**, LAC	K	9
☐ 240.	Sebastian **Janikowski**, OAK	K	10

RK	PLAYER	POS	BYE
33.	Benardrick **McKinney**, HOU	LB	7
34.	Eric **Kendricks**, MIN	LB	9
35	Christian **Kirksey**, CLE	LB	9
36.	Derrick **Johnson**, KC	LB	10
37.	Jatavis **Brown**, LAC	LB	9
38.	Jarrad **Davis**, DET	LB	7
39.	Reggie **Ragland**, BUF	LB	6
40.	Deone **Bucannon**, ARI	LB	8
41.	Deion **Jones**, ATL	LB	5
42.	Mark **Barron**, LAR	LB	8
43.	Lawrence **Timmons**, MIA	LB	11
44.	K.J. **Wright**, SEA	LB	6
45.	Myles **Jack**, JAC	LB	8
46.	Reuben **Foster**, SF	LB	11
47.	Morgan **Burnett**, GB	DB	8
48.	Harrison **Smith**, MIN	DB	9
49.	Keanu **Neal**, ATL	DB	5
50.	Jamal **Adams**, NYJ	DB	11
51.	A.J. **Klein**, NO	LB	5
52.	Kiko **Alonso**, MIA	LB	11
53.	Darron **Lee**, NYJ	LB	11
54.	Paul **Posluszny**, JAC	LB	8
55.	Avery **Williamson**, TEN	LB	8
56.	Robert **Quinn**, LAR	DL	8
57.	Brandon **Graham**, PHI	DL	10
58.	Michael **Bennett**, SEA	DL	6
59.	Kawann **Short**, CAR	DL	11
60.	Derek **Wolfe**, DEN	DL	5
61.	Marcell **Dareus**, BUF	DL	6
62.	Gerald **McCoy**, TB	DL	11
63.	Geno **Atkins**, CIN	DL	6
64.	Cliff **Avril**, SEA	DL	6
65.	Myles **Garrett**, CLE	DL	9

2017 QB RANKINGS

QUARTERBACKS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. Aaron **Rodgers**	GB	8
☐ 2. Tom **Brady**	NE	9
☐ 3. Drew **Brees**	NO	5
☐ 4. Andrew **Luck**	IND	11
☐ 5. Russell **Wilson**	SEA	6
☐ 6. Philip **Rivers**	LAC	9
☐ 7. Kirk **Cousins**	WAS	5
☐ 8. Dak **Prescott**	DAL	6
☐ 9. Jameis **Winston**	TB	11
☐ 10. Matthew **Stafford**	DET	7
☐ 11. Cam **Newton**	CAR	11
☐ 12. Marcus **Mariota**	TEN	8
☐ 13. Ben **Roethlisberger**	PIT	9
☐ 14. Matt **Ryan**	ATL	5
☐ 15. Blake **Bortles**	JAC	8
☐ 16. Andy **Dalton**	CIN	6
☐ 17. Tyrod **Taylor**	BUF	6
☐ 18. Eli **Manning**	NYG	8
☐ 19. Derek **Carr**	OAK	10
☐ 20. Carson **Wentz**	PHI	10
☐ 21. Alex **Smith**	KC	10
☐ 22. Ryan **Tannehill**	MIA	11
☐ 23. Carson **Palmer**	ARI	8
☐ 24. Joe **Flacco**	BAL	10
☐ 25. Sam **Bradford**	MIN	9
☐ 26. Brian **Hoyer**	SF	11
☐ 27. Jared **Goff**	LAR	8
☐ 28. Josh **McCown**	NYJ	11
☐ 29. Trevor **Siemian**	DEN	5
☐ 30. Paxton **Lynch**	DEN	5
☐ 31. Tom **Savage**	HOU	7
☐ 32. Mike **Glennon**	CHI	9
☐ 33. Cody **Kessler**	CLE	9
☐ 34. Mitch **Trubisky**	CHI	9
☐ 35. Deshaun **Watson**	HOU	7
☐ 36. Patrick **Mahomes**	KC	10
☐ 37. Brock **Osweiler**	CLE	9
☐ 38. Derek **Anderson**	CAR	11
☐ 39. Case **Keenum**	MIN	9
☐ 40. Drew **Stanton**	ARI	8

AARON RODGERS

AVERAGE DEPTH OF THROW

At Pro Football Focus, our game analysts are constantly creating new statistical categories in hopes of maximizing the viewing public's understanding of the game. In 2007, we began tracking the depth of each pass. When examining quarterback tendencies, many will refer to yards per attempt, but it's important to realize that "YPA" can be severely distorted by completion percentage and YAC (yards after catch). This is where Average Depth of Throw (aDOT) comes into play. Proven to be significantly more predictable on a year-to-year basis, aDOT tracks only the distance downfield each pass travels before it is complete, incomplete or intercepted. Quarterbacks with high aDOT marks generally take more chances, which will lead to more of the coveted big plays, but also to a lower completion rate and additional interceptions. Quarterbacks with lower aDOT tendencies are more conservative, settling for short completions while avoiding costly turnovers.

JAMEIS WINSTON

Shown here are the aDOT marks for each quarterback who dropped back to pass at least 100 times during the 2016 season. To maximize our sample size, we include playoff data.

Rk	Quarterback	Team	DB	aDOT
1.	Matt Barkley	CHI	223	10.56
2.	Jameis Winston	TB	632	10.12
3.	Cam Newton	CAR	557	9.93
4.	Marcus Mariota	TEN	500	9.30
5.	Carson Palmer	ARZ	644	9.23
6.	Josh McCown	CLE	188	9.13
7.	Ryan Fitzpatrick	NYJ	441	9.12
8.	Ben Roethlisberger	PIT	630	9.01
9.	Tyrod Taylor	BUF	529	8.90
10.	Aaron Rodgers	GB	831	8.77
11.	Jay Cutler	CHI	157	8.71
12.	Kirk Cousins	WAS	638	8.67
13.	Bryce Petty	NYJ	150	8.65
14.	Matt Ryan	ATL	698	8.57
15.	Brock Osweiler	HOU	625	8.52
16.	Robert Griffin III	CLE	183	8.38
17.	Dak Prescott	DAL	555	8.31
18.	Trevor Siemian	DEN	530	8.30
19.	Blaine Gabbert	SF	189	8.24
20.	Russell Wilson	SEA	701	8.23
21.	Andrew Luck	IND	628	8.23
22.	Eli Manning	NYG	670	8.05
23.	Blake Bortles	JAX	698	8.03
24.	Philip Rivers	SD	622	7.99
25.	Tom Brady	NE	614	7.95
26.	Brian Hoyer	CHI	206	7.91
27.	Case Keenum	LA	354	7.85
28.	Derek Carr	OAK	593	7.83
29.	Matt Moore	MIA	130	7.77
30.	Colin Kaepernick	SF	403	7.66
31.	Ryan Tannehill	MIA	434	7.60
32.	Andy Dalton	CIN	627	7.58
33.	Matthew Stafford	DET	696	7.43
34.	Carson Wentz	PHI	662	7.21
35.	Joe Flacco	BAL	713	7.20
36.	Drew Brees	NO	704	7.19
37.	Cody Kessler	CLE	221	7.15
38.	Jared Goff	LA	234	6.76
39.	Alex D. Smith	KC	578	6.62
40.	Sam Bradford	MIN	596	6.13

TOP 10 INJURY CONCERNS

1. ANDREW LUCK, IND Luck injured his shoulder in 2015 and dealt with the pain throughout the '16 season. He opted to finally have surgery this past offseason. He plans to be ready for Week 1, but a quarterback coming off surgery on his throwing shoulder is a little concerning.

2. MARCUS MARIOTA, TEN In his rookie season, Mariota battled knee injuries and played in only 12 games. His 2016 season was better — he missed only one game because of a broken leg. However, he is still rehabbing, and back-to-back seasons with leg injuries for a mobile quarterback qualify him as an injury concern.

3. CAM NEWTON, CAR Newton missed a game in 2016 because of a concussion but also was dealing with a shoulder injury toward the end of the season. He underwent shoulder surgery in March, and because he's such a mobile QB, he is more prone to injury, especially because he gets a lot of carries around the goal line.

4. RUSSELL WILSON, SEA Wilson has yet to miss a game in his career, but he was pretty beat up in 2016. He had injuries to both legs — an ankle and a knee — and his mobility was affected. He played through both injuries, but his rushing totals were significantly lower in 2016 than they have been in the past.

5. BEN ROETHLISBERGER, PIT After Roethlisberger dealt with knee injuries the past two seasons, fantasy owners should be concerned about his ability to play all 16 games. He missed only two games in 2016, for a torn meniscus, but he's only played all 16 games two times in the past eight seasons.

6. MATTHEW STAFFORD, DET In each of the past six seasons, Stafford has played all 16 games, but he is still considered "injury prone" because of the time he missed early in his career and his propensity to get dinged up. He's dealt with hand and finger injuries over the past two seasons, but they haven't cost him any time.

7. DEREK CARR, OAK After suffering a broken leg in Week 16, Carr should be back to full health for 2017. He also was dealing with a finger injury throughout the last quarter of his 2016 campaign. Neither injury should be an issue by the time Week 1 rolls around.

8. RYAN TANNEHILL, MIA In 2016, Tannehill suffered a knee injury that cost him the final three games of the season. Knee injuries tend to crop up year after year.

9. AARON RODGERS, GB Rodgers hasn't missed a game in the past three seasons, but he's played through a number of soft tissue injuries. He is a mobile quarterback, and when his hamstring or calf is compromised, his play (and therefore fantasy value) suffers.

10. CARSON PALMER, ARI Even though he missed only one game in 2016 (concussion), Palmer, 37, is likely playing his last season. He's torn his ACL twice and has played through a number of issues.

Rodgers: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Winston: Peter Brouillet; Bell: W. E. Smith III

2017 RB RANKINGS

RUNNING BACKS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. David **Johnson**	ARI	8
☐ 2. Le'Veon **Bell**	PIT	9
☐ 3. Ezekiel **Elliott**	DAL	6
☐ 4. Melvin **Gordon**	LAC	9
☐ 5. Devonta **Freeman**	ATL	5
☐ 6. LeSean **McCoy**	BUF	6
☐ 7. Jordan **Howard**	CHI	9
☐ 8. Jay **Ajayi**	MIA	11
☐ 9. DeMarco **Murray**	TEN	8
☐ 10. Lamar **Miller**	HOU	7
☐ 11. Todd **Gurley**	LAR	8
☐ 12. Carlos **Hyde**	SF	11
☐ 13. Leonard **Fournette**	JAC	8
☐ 14. Christian **McCaffrey**	CAR	11
☐ 15. Ty **Montgomery**	GB	8
☐ 16. Isaiah **Crowell**	CLE	9
☐ 17. Mark **Ingram**	NO	5
☐ 18. Tevin **Coleman**	ATL	5
☐ 19. Paul **Perkins**	NYG	8
☐ 20. Dalvin **Cook**	MIN	9
☐ 21. Bilal **Powell**	NYJ	11
☐ 22. C.J. **Anderson**	DEN	5
☐ 23. Spencer **Ware**	KC	10
☐ 24. Danny **Woodhead**	BAL	10
☐ 25. Theo **Riddick**	DET	7
☐ 26. Gio **Bernard**	CIN	6
☐ 27. Eddie **Lacy**	SEA	6
☐ 28. Frank **Gore**	IND	11
☐ 29. Mike **Gillislee**	NE	9
☐ 30. Marshawn **Lynch**	OAK	10
☐ 31. Kenneth **Dixon**	BAL	10
☐ 32. Matt **Forté**	NYJ	11
☐ 33. Samaje **Perine**	WAS	5
☐ 34. C.J. **Prosise**	SEA	6
☐ 35. Ameer **Abdullah**	DET	7
☐ 36. Joe **Mixon**	CIN	6
☐ 37. Kareem **Hunt**	KC	10
☐ 38. Doug **Martin**	TB	11
☐ 39. Adrian **Peterson**	NO	5
☐ 40. Derrick **Henry**	TEN	8

RUNNING BACKS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 41. Rex **Burkhead**	NE	9
☐ 42. Duke **Johnson Jr.**	CLE	9
☐ 43. Darren **Sproles**	PHI	10
☐ 44. James **White**	NE	9
☐ 45. Latavius **Murray**	MIN	9
☐ 46. Jamaal **Charles**	DEN	5
☐ 47. Wendell **Smallwood**	PHI	10
☐ 48. Marlon **Mack**	IND	11
☐ 49. Ryan **Mathews**	PHI	10
☐ 50. Jalen **Richard**	OAK	10
☐ 51. DeAndre **Washington**	OAK	10
☐ 52. Chris **Thompson**	WAS	5
☐ 53. Shane **Vereen**	NYG	8
☐ 54. Rob **Kelley**	WAS	5
☐ 55. Jonathan **Williams**	BUF	6
☐ 56. Charles **Sims**	TB	11
☐ 57. Jeremy **Hill**	CIN	6
☐ 58. Zach **Zenner**	DET	7
☐ 59. Dion **Lewis**	NE	9
☐ 60. Donnel **Pumphrey**	PHI	10
☐ 61. Jeremy **McNichols**	TB	11
☐ 62. T.J. **Yeldon**	JAC	8
☐ 63. Jamaal **Williams**	GB	8
☐ 64. Tyler **Ervin**	HOU	7
☐ 65. Jonathan **Stewart**	CAR	11
☐ 66. Terrance **West**	BAL	10
☐ 67. Kenyan **Drake**	MIA	11
☐ 68. Tarik **Cohen**	CHI	9
☐ 69. D'Onta **Foreman**	HOU	7
☐ 70. Wayne **Gallman**	NYG	8
☐ 71. T.J. **Logan**	ARI	8
☐ 72. Robert **Turbin**	IND	11
☐ 73. Lance **Dunbar**	LAR	8
☐ 74. Jacquizz **Rodgers**	TB	11
☐ 75. James **Conner**	PIT	9
☐ 76. Thomas **Rawls**	SEA	6
☐ 77. Andre **Ellington**	ARI	8
☐ 78. Alfred **Morris**	DAL	6
☐ 79. Chris **Ivory**	JAC	8
☐ 80. Jerick **McKinnon**	MIN	9

TOP 10 INJURY CONCERNS

1. DANNY WOODHEAD, BAL In two of the past three years, Woodhead has suffered season-ending injuries early in the year — a broken leg in 2014 and a torn ACL in 2016. He should be fully recovered from the ACL injury, but keep in mind he is 32 years old.

2. ADRIAN PETERSON, NO After tearing his ACL in 2012, Peterson came back stronger than ever. He missed most of the 2014 season because of off-field issues, returned strong in '15, and then had a rough '16. He tore his meniscus and missed most of the season, and he signed with the Saints as a free agent. At 32, he's not going to bounce back as quickly as he used to.

3. MARSHAWN LYNCH, OAK Lynch was fairly healthy through much of his career, until 2015. He missed nine games and had his season cut short due to sports hernia surgery. He chose to retire, and now, at age 31, has come back after taking 2016 off. It's unclear what kind of shape he's in and how he will respond to taking hits.

4. RYAN MATHEWS, PHI After injuring his neck in Week 16, Mathews required surgery in the offseason. He also missed time in the 2016 season with a knee injury. He had a concussion that cost him time in 2015, and he hasn't played all 16 games in any of the past three years. It's unclear if he'll be with the Eagles come Week 1, but wherever he lands, he's likely going to be injured.

5. LE'VEON BELL, PIT While not typically classified as an injury risk, Bell has dealt with multiple knee injuries during his career. He had groin surgery in March, and while he should be fine for the start of 2017, it is worth keeping an eye on. Whether due to suspension or injury, he's played only one full season in his four-year career.

6. THOMAS RAWLS, SEA Coming back from a broken ankle, Rawls suffered a leg injury at the beginning of the 2016 season that cost him seven games. He also dealt with a shoulder injury toward the end of the season, adding to his lost year. In his two years in the league, Rawls has yet to play a full season.

7. CARLOS HYDE, SF In his three years in the league, Hyde has yet to play a full season. He had foot surgery before the 2016 season, and then he suffered a shoulder injury in 2016 that cost him three games. He's seemingly always banged up, and fantasy owners should be prepared for him to miss games.

8. MARK INGRAM, NO For the first time in four seasons, Ingram stayed healthy. However, his past injury history simply cannot be ignored. He's dealt with shoulder injuries in the past and just hasn't been a durable player. It's unlikely he'll play all 16 games in 2017.

9. JONATHAN STEWART, CAR At 30 years old, Stewart hasn't played a full season in the past five years. He's battled a variety of injuries in the past, and in 2016, it was a nagging hamstring pull that cost him three games. Even with Christian McCaffrey sharing some of the workload, Stewart likely won't play a full season.

10. DOUG MARTIN, TB The 2016 season was pretty much lost for Martin, who dealt with a hamstring injury that cost him six weeks in the middle of the campaign. He's put together two solid seasons (2012, '15), but the other three years have been a disappointment. He's suspended for the first three games in 2017, but odds are he won't stay healthy throughout the season anyway.

WORKLOAD WATCH

TOUCHES PER GAME, 3-YEAR vs. 2-YEAR

Touch/Game, 3-yr	TPG	TCH	GP
1. Le'Veon Bell	24.9	846	34
2. DeMarco Murray	22.0	1,032	47
3. Adrian Peterson	21.0	420	20
4. Matt Forté	20.4	878	43
5. LeSean McCoy	20.0	859	43
6. Frank Gore	17.9	861	48
7. Doug Martin	17.9	626	35
8. Mark Ingram	17.6	722	41
9. Jonathan Stewart	17.5	684	39
10. Lamar Miller	17.3	794	46
11. Justin Forsett	16.2	568	35
12. Rashad Jennings	15.9	637	40
13. Eddie Lacy	15.8	570	36
14. Jeremy Hill	15.5	730	47
15. Devonta Freeman	15.2	714	47

Touch/Game, 2-yr	TPG	TCH	GP
1. Le'Veon Bell	26.3	473	18
2. Adrian Peterson	20.9	397	19
3. Devonta Freeman	20.0	619	31
4. Doug Martin	20.0	479	24
5. Todd Gurley	19.7	571	29
6. LeSean McCoy	19.2	519	27
7. Melvin Gordon	19.0	512	27
8. Matt Forté	18.9	510	27
9. DeMarco Murray	18.8	583	31
10. Jonathan Stewart	18.6	484	26
11. Frank Gore	18.6	595	32
12. Carlos Hyde	18.5	370	20
13. Lamar Miller	18.0	540	30
14. Latavius Murray	17.8	535	30
15. LeGarrette Blount	17.0	477	28

LE'VEON BELL

2017 WR RANKINGS

WIDE RECEIVERS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. Antonio **Brown**	PIT	9
☐ 2. Odell **Beckham Jr.**	NYG	8
☐ 3. Julio **Jones**	ATL	5
☐ 4. Mike **Evans**	TB	11
☐ 5. Jordy **Nelson**	GB	8
☐ 6. A.J. **Green**	CIN	6
☐ 7. Dez **Bryant**	DAL	6
☐ 8. Michael **Thomas**	NO	5
☐ 9. T.Y. **Hilton**	IND	11
☐ 10. Demaryius **Thomas**	DEN	5
☐ 11. Golden **Tate**	DET	7
☐ 12. Brandin **Cooks**	NE	9
☐ 13. Amari **Cooper**	OAK	10
☐ 14. Doug **Baldwin**	SEA	6
☐ 15. Keenan **Allen**	LAC	9
☐ 16. DeAndre **Hopkins**	HOU	7
☐ 17. Allen **Robinson**	JAC	8
☐ 18. Julian **Edelman**	NE	9
☐ 19. Michael **Crabtree**	OAK	10
☐ 20. Sammy **Watkins**	BUF	6
☐ 21. Brandon **Marshall**	NYG	8
☐ 22. Martavis **Bryant**	PIT	9
☐ 23. Jarvis **Landry**	MIA	11
☐ 24. Larry **Fitzgerald**	ARI	8
☐ 25. Alshon **Jeffery**	PHI	10
☐ 26. Davante **Adams**	GB	8
☐ 27. Kelvin **Benjamin**	CAR	11
☐ 28. Pierre **Garçon**	SF	11
☐ 29. Emmanuel **Sanders**	DEN	5
☐ 30. DeSean **Jackson**	TB	11
☐ 31. Donte **Moncrief**	IND	11
☐ 32. Corey **Coleman**	CLE	9
☐ 33. Willie **Snead**	NO	5
☐ 34. Jeremy **Maclin**	KC	10
☐ 35. Mike **Wallace**	BAL	10
☐ 36. Stefon **Diggs**	MIN	9
☐ 37. Tyrell **Williams**	LAC	9
☐ 38. Jordan **Matthews**	PHI	10
☐ 39. John **Brown**	ARI	8
☐ 40. Jamison **Crowder**	WAS	5
☐ 41. DeVante **Parker**	MIA	11
☐ 42. Ted **Ginn Jr.**	NO	5
☐ 43. Randall **Cobb**	GB	8
☐ 44. Rishard **Matthews**	TEN	8
☐ 45. Tyreek **Hill**	KC	10
☐ 46. Kevin **White**	CHI	9
☐ 47. Kenny **Britt**	CLE	9
☐ 48. Adam **Thielen**	MIN	9
☐ 49. Quincy **Enunwa**	NYJ	11
☐ 50. Cameron **Meredith**	CHI	9
☐ 51. Corey **Davis**	TEN	8
☐ 52. Kenny **Stills**	MIA	11
☐ 53. Terrelle **Pryor**	WAS	5
☐ 54. Eric **Decker**	NYJ	11
☐ 55. Marvin **Jones**	DET	7
☐ 56. Tyler **Lockett**	SEA	6
☐ 57. Breshad **Perriman**	BAL	10
☐ 58. Cole **Beasley**	DAL	6
☐ 59. Allen **Hurns**	JAC	8
☐ 60. Taylor **Gabriel**	ATL	5
☐ 61. Will **Fuller V**	HOU	7
☐ 62. Robby **Anderson**	NYJ	11
☐ 63. Sterling **Shepard**	NYG	8
☐ 64. Tavon **Austin**	LAR	8
☐ 65. Zay **Jones**	BUF	6
☐ 66. J.J. **Nelson**	CAR	11
☐ 67. Marqise **Lee**	JAC	8
☐ 68. Josh **Doctson**	WAS	5
☐ 69. John **Ross**	CIN	6
☐ 70. Devin **Funchess**	CAR	11
☐ 71. Robert **Woods**	LAR	8
☐ 72. Terrance **Williams**	DAL	6
☐ 73. Torrey **Smith**	PHI	10
☐ 74. Mohamed **Sanu**	ATL	5
☐ 75. Mike **Williams**	LAC	9
☐ 76. Laquon **Treadwell**	MIN	9
☐ 77. Curtis **Samuel**	CAR	11
☐ 78. Paul **Richardson**	SEA	6
☐ 79. Marquise **Goodwin**	SF	11
☐ 80. Cordarrelle **Patterson**	OAK	10
☐ 81. Brandon **Coleman**	NO	5
☐ 82. Taywan **Taylor**	TEN	8
☐ 83. Jermaine **Kearse**	SEA	6
☐ 84. Kamar **Aiken**	IND	11
☐ 85. Tyler **Boyd**	CIN	6
☐ 86. Travis **Benjamin**	LAC	9
☐ 87. Chris **Hogan**	NE	9
☐ 88. Chris **Conley**	KC	10
☐ 89. Malcolm **Mitchell**	NE	9
☐ 90. Kenny **Golladay**	DET	7

TOP 10 INJURY CONCERNS

1. KEENAN ALLEN, SD Fantasy owners have likely been burned by Allen at some point in his four-year NFL career. He's had knee and hip injuries as well as a lacerated kidney. Last season, he tore the ACL in his right knee in Week 1. He's had plenty of time to recover, but don't be surprised if he's not at 100 percent at the start of this season.

2. A.J. GREEN, CIN Green suffered a torn hamstring in Week 11, giving his fantasy owners a goose egg that week and for the rest of the season. He should be healthy for the 2017 season, but fantasy owners should be a little cautious with Green coming off a significant soft tissue injury.

3. SAMMY WATKINS, BUF In the past two seasons, Watkins has played only 21 games. He missed the majority of 2016 due to issues following foot surgery, although he's also dealt with ankle injuries in the past. The Bills, by not exercising his fifth-year option for 2018, also may be concerned with his ability to stay healthy.

4. ERIC DECKER, NYJ Decker's 2016 season was cut short in Week 3 when he suffered a season-ending shoulder injury. He had surgery on both his shoulder and his hip in the offseason, and he should be healthy for the start of the 2017 season — if the Jets decide to keep him.

5. DEZ BRYANT, DAL After dealing with foot injuries throughout 2015, Bryant suffered a hairline fracture in his knee in Week 3 last season. He missed three games but was able to return and didn't suffer any setbacks with the knee.

6. DESEAN JACKSON, TB Jackson has a history with injuries, whether they be concussions, hamstring pulls or shoulder issues. The Buccaneers are reportedly considering using him as a punt returner, which increases his injury risk. He's the epitome of a risk/reward WR.

7. STEFON DIGGS, MIN Diggs was a promising WR heading into 2016 but ended up missing three games due to injury. He was significantly hampered in many other games by a nagging groin injury. He also ended up on the injury report with hip and knee issues throughout the season.

8. RANDALL COBB, GB Cobb has dealt with shoulder, hamstring and ankle injuries. He missed three games in 2016, and he's played through a number of injuries throughout his career. As a small receiver, he's prone to injury.

9. JOHN BROWN, ARI While Brown technically missed only one game in both 2015 and '16, there were numerous games (especially last season) in which he simply didn't show up on the stat sheet. He had hamstring issues in 2015 and last season dealt with sickle-cell-related complications. The Cardinals believe he should be healthy in 2017, but that remains to be seen.

10. JOHN ROSS, CIN Including a rookie on the injury concern list isn't common, but in Ross' case, it seems warranted. The first-round pick has a history of knee and shoulder injuries, many of which were serious (torn ACL, microfracture surgery, torn labrum). Ross just had shoulder surgery in March, but he should be ready to go by Week 1.

AVERAGE DEPTH OF TARGET

Tracked by our game analysts at Pro Football Focus, Average Depth of Target (aDOT) is a better method of tracking the way NFL pass catchers are utilized. Basically an improved version of the popular and mainstream yards per reception (YPR) statistic, aDOT removes volatile YAC (yards after catch) from the equation, instead focusing only on the average distance the player is downfield on each target. Because we're analyzing targets and not receptions, our sample nearly doubles in size, which is key in developing predictable statistics. This season, when your leaguemates are gushing over Joe Schmo's 23.5 YPR thanks to one, fluky bubble screen gone right, you'll see his 5.0 aDOT and know he's not the deep threat he appears to be.

Shown here are the Top 20 and Bottom 20 aDOT marks from the 2016 season. Only wide receivers with 40-plus targets are shown, and playoff data is included.

Wide Receiver Top 20 (min 40 targets)

Rk	Wide Receivers	Team	Targ	aDOT
1.	Sammie Coates	PIT	54	21.65
2.	J.J. Nelson	ARZ	67	18.13
3.	Robby Anderson	NYJ	75	17.47
4.	DeSean Jackson	WAS	89	16.89
5.	Marquise Goodwin	BUF	63	16.56
6.	Mike Evans	TB	168	16.01
7.	Corey Coleman	CLE	62	15.97
8.	Kenny Stills	MIA	80	15.58
9.	Terrelle Pryor	CLE	132	15.48
10.	Will Fuller	HOU	99	15.35
11.	Alshon Jeffery	CHI	92	15.35
12.	Dez Bryant	DAL	100	15.12
13.	Michael Floyd	ARZ	75	15.08
14.	Paul Richardson	SEA	41	14.83
15.	John Brown	ARZ	66	14.77
16.	Chris Hogan	NE	77	14.68
17.	Breshad Perriman	BAL	64	14.67
18.	Sammy Watkins	BUF	50	14.64
19.	Marvin Jones	DET	107	14.47
20.	Torrey Smith	SF	45	14.36

Wide Receiver Bottom 20 (min 40 targets)

Rk	Wide Receivers	Team	Targ	aDOT
78.	Jeremy Kerley	SF	108	9.02
79.	Steve L. Smith	BAL	102	9.01
80.	Stefon Diggs	MIN	109	8.69
81.	Mohamed Sanu	ATL	92	8.67
82.	Golden Tate	DET	136	8.44
83.	Randall Cobb	GB	104	8.24
84.	Jamison Crowder	WAS	92	8.23
85.	Michael A. Thomas	NO	119	8.19
86.	Larry Fitzgerald	ARZ	147	8.12
87.	Andrew Hawkins	CLV	50	8.00
88.	Tyreek Hill	KC	86	8.00
89.	Willie Snead	NO	96	7.78
90.	Tavon Austin	LA	101	7.70
91.	Albert Wilson	KC	53	7.21
92.	Eddie Royal	CHI	44	6.86
93.	Jarvis Landry	MIA	136	6.79
94.	Anquan Boldin	DET	94	6.52
95.	Cole Beasley	DAL	97	6.34
96.	Adam Humphries	TB	77	6.10
97.	Cordarrelle Patterson	MIN	64	4.81

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2017 TE RANKINGS

TIGHT ENDS	TEAM	BYE
☐ 1. Rob **Gronkowski**	NE	9
☐ 2. Jordan **Reed**	WAS	5
☐ 3. Greg **Olsen**	CAR	11
☐ 4. Travis **Kelce**	KC	10
☐ 5. Delanie **Walker**	TEN	8
☐ 6. Jimmy **Graham**	SEA	6
☐ 7. Eric **Ebron**	DET	7
☐ 8. Hunter **Henry**	LAC	9
☐ 9. Austin **Hooper**	ATL	5
☐ 10. Kyle **Rudolph**	MIN	9
☐ 11. Zach **Ertz**	PHI	10
☐ 12. Jason **Witten**	DAL	6
☐ 13. Martellus **Bennett**	GB	8
☐ 14. Tyler **Eifert**	CIN	6
☐ 15. O.J. **Howard**	TB	11
☐ 16. Charles **Clay**	BUF	6
☐ 17. Jack **Doyle**	IND	11
☐ 18. Ladarius **Green**	PIT	9
☐ 19. Coby **Fleener**	NO	5
☐ 20. Evan **Engram**	NYG	8
☐ 21. C.J. **Fiedorowicz**	HOU	7
☐ 22. David **Njoku**	CLE	9
☐ 23. Jared **Cook**	OAK	10
☐ 24. Dion **Sims**	CHI	9
☐ 25. Vance **McDonald**	SF	11
☐ 26. Julius **Thomas**	MIA	11
☐ 27. Jermaine **Gresham**	ARI	8
☐ 28. Antonio **Gates**	LAC	9
☐ 29. Dwayne **Allen**	NE	9
☐ 30. Benjamin **Watson**	BAL	10
☐ 31. Ryan **Griffin**	HOU	7
☐ 32. Erik **Swoope**	IND	11
☐ 33. A.J. **Derby**	DEN	5
☐ 34. Tyler **Higbee**	LAR	8
☐ 35. Dennis **Pitta**	BAL	10
☐ 36. Jordan **Leggett**	NYJ	11
☐ 37. Mychal **Rivera**	JAC	8
☐ 38. Clive **Walford**	OAK	10
☐ 39. Gerald **Everett**	LAR	8
☐ 40. Josh **Hill**	NO	5
☐ 41. Seth **DeValve**	CLE	9
☐ 42. Trey **Burton**	PHI	10
☐ 43. Vernon **Davis**	WAS	5
☐ 44. Marcedes **Lewis**	JAC	8
☐ 45. Adam **Shaheen**	CHI	9
☐ 46. Zach **Miller**	CHI	9
☐ 47. Virgil **Green**	DEN	5
☐ 48. Jesse **James**	PIT	9
☐ 49. Lance **Kendricks**	GB	8
☐ 50. Cameron **Brate**	TB	11

AVERAGE DEPTH OF TARGET

Tracked by our game analysts at Pro Football Focus, Average Depth of Target (aDOT) is a better method of tracking the way NFL pass catchers are utilized. Basically an improved version of the popular and mainstream yards per reception (YPR) statistic, aDOT removes volatile YAC (yards after catch) from the equation, instead focusing only on the average distance the player is down field on each target. Because we're analyzing targets and not receptions, our sample nearly doubles in size, which is key in developing predictable statistics. This season, when looking for a bye week fill-in, bold owners can take a chance on a tight end with a high aDOT in hopes of a big play or two. Risk-averse owners in PPR formats can nab a big man with a low aDOT, and thus higher catch potential.

Shown here are the aDOT marks for each tight end targeted at least 40 times during the 2016 season. To maximize our sample size, playoff data is included.

Rk	Tight Ends	Team	Targ	aDOT
1.	Greg Olsen	CAR	122	11.82
2.	Jared Cook	GB	81	11.36
3.	Delanie Walker	TEN	96	10.58
4.	Vance McDonald	SF	43	10.33
5.	Coby Fleener	NO	80	10.10
6.	Cameron Brate	TB	78	10.08
7.	Hunter Henry	SD	47	10.04
8.	Garrett Celek	SF	47	9.91
9.	Jimmy Graham	SEA	100	9.91
10.	Vernon Davis	WAS	59	9.78
11.	Dwayne Allen	IND	48	9.04
12.	Richard Rodgers	GB	45	9.00
13.	Zach Ertz	PHI	101	8.97
14.	Clive Walford	OAK	51	8.78
15.	Antonio Gates	SD	85	8.76
16.	Charles Clay	BUF	81	8.59
17.	Eric Ebron	DET	91	8.38
18.	Jordan Reed	WAS	85	8.33
19.	Ryan Griffin	HOU	78	8.23
20.	Trey Burton	PHI	58	8.14
21.	Jermaine Gresham	ARZ	58	8.09
22.	Julius Thomas	JAX	47	7.98
23.	C.J. Fiedorowicz	HOU	91	7.98
24.	Gary Barnidge	CLV	77	7.69
25.	Jesse James	PIT	72	7.65
26.	Travis Kelce	KC	121	7.25
27.	Jason Witten	DAL	100	7.23
28.	Kyle Rudolph	MIN	120	7.17
29.	Zach Miller	CHI	62	6.98
30.	Will Tye	NYG	73	6.63
31.	Jack Doyle	IND	72	6.63
32.	Dennis Pitta	BAL	116	6.53
33.	Martellus Bennett	NE	81	6.15
34.	Lance Kendricks	LA	74	5.49

TOP 10 INJURY CONCERNS

1. ROB GRONKOWSKI, NE When it comes to tight ends and injury concerns, the only place to start is Gronkowski. His 2016 season was a bust, as he technically played eight games but recorded a reception in only six of those. He had his third back surgery and missed the beginning of the season with a hamstring injury. He's had a litany of significant injuries, and fantasy owners just need to hope for a few solid games while he's relatively healthy.

2. JORDAN REED, WAS Reed is a tough player, but he's dealt with his share of injuries. He missed time with both a concussion and a shoulder injury in 2016. He has yet to play 16 games in his four years in the league, and being a physical player, he will likely not play a full season in 2017 either.

3. TYLER EIFERT, CIN Slow to come back from an ankle injury, Eifert missed the first six games of the 2016 season. He then suffered a back injury and missed the final two games. He had surgery in late December, which makes his status for Week 1 uncertain.

4. JIMMY GRAHAM, SEA After suffering a torn patellar tendon at the end of the 2015 season, Graham returned last season and played every game. However, it is still one of the toughest injuries to come back from, so just be sure to have a solid backup should you draft Graham.

5. ZACH MILLER, CHI Miller suffered a broken foot in 2016 that cost him the last six games of the season. He had surgery on it (second such surgery in his career), but he should be ready for the start of the season. He has yet to play in all 16 games in any season of his five-year career.

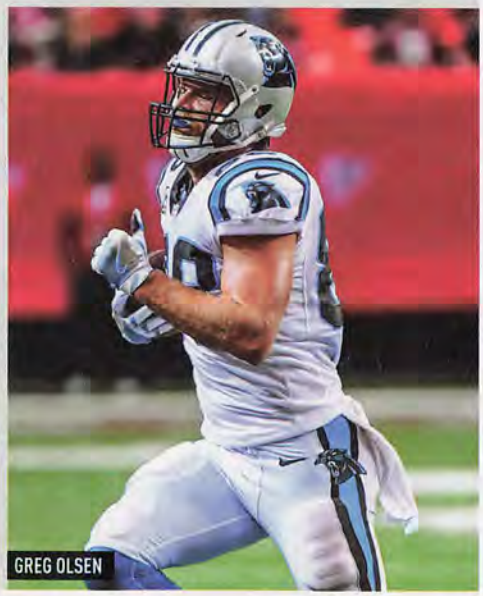
6. LADARIUS GREEN, PIT Green missed half of the season while was recovering from ankle surgery. He also suffered a concussion in Week 15 that ended his season, and he was reportedly still dealing with the after effects during the offseason. Given his history, he carries plenty of risk, and it's likely he doesn't make it through all 16 games healthy.

7. ANTONIO GATES, LAC Entering his 15th season, it's almost a given that Gates won't play in all 16 games. Not only is his age (37 in June) a concern, but the Chargers also have Hunter Henry waiting in the wings. Gates is no longer the safe TE1 that he has been for most of his career — both for injury and performance reasons.

8. ERIC EBRON, DET Over the past three seasons, Ebron has missed three, two and three games, respectively. Last season, he had a knee injury, and in the past he's dealt with soft tissue injuries as well. He's proven that he can play most but not all of a season.

9. JULIUS THOMAS, MIA The most games Thomas has played in any of his six seasons is 14. He's dealt with ankle, hand, elbow and shoulder injuries, although it was a back injury that ended his 2016 campaign after Week 11. He's definitely injury prone, but he is a big presence in the red zone when healthy.

10. DWAYNE ALLEN, NE Allen has missed at least two games in each of the past three seasons. He suffered an ankle injury that cost him two games in 2016. Now teammates, he and Rob Gronkowski form arguably the most injury-prone tight end tandem in the NFL


GREG OLSEN

Olsen: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Peterson: W. E. Smith III

2017 DST RANKINGS

DEFENSE/SPECIAL TEAMS

PATRICK PETERSON

	DEFENSE/SPECIAL TEAMS	BYE		DEFENSE/SPECIAL TEAMS	BYE
☐ 1.	**Arizona**	8	☐ 17.	**L.A. Rams**	8
☐ 2.	**Kansas City**	10	☐ 18.	**Buffalo**	6
☐ 3.	**L.A. Chargers**	9	☐ 19.	**Cincinnati**	6
☐ 4.	**Denver**	5	☐ 20.	**Green Bay**	8
☐ 5.	**N.Y. Giants**	8	☐ 21.	**Pittsburgh**	9
☐ 6.	**Minnesota**	9	☐ 22.	**Oakland**	10
☐ 7.	**Seattle**	6	☐ 23.	**Washington**	5
☐ 8.	**Houston**	7	☐ 24.	**New Orleans**	5
☐ 9.	**Carolina**	11	☐ 25.	**San Francisco**	11
☐ 10.	**Philadelphia**	10	☐ 26.	**Tennessee**	8
☐ 11.	**Atlanta**	5	☐ 27.	**Detroit**	7
☐ 12.	**Tampa Bay**	11	☐ 28.	**Chicago**	9
☐ 13.	**Baltimore**	10	☐ 29.	**Dallas**	6
☐ 14.	**New England**	9	☐ 30.	**N.Y. Jets**	11
☐ 15.	**Jacksonville**	8	☐ 31.	**Indianapolis**	11
☐ 16.	**Miami**	11	☐ 32.	**Cleveland**	9

Going up, Going Down

Oakland Raiders The Raiders finished ranked 26th in total defense last season, but there are plenty of reasons to expect better results in 2017. For one, their 2017 draft class included three new pieces in Gareon Conley (CB), Obi Melifonwu (S) and Eddie Vanderdoes (DT) — and featured a total of six defenders overall. Oakland already has All-Pro defensive end Khalil Mack, who dominated last season and could be even more dangerous with a better supporting cast. The Raiders also signed Cordarrelle Patterson in free agency. A two-time All-Pro kick returner with Minnesota, Patterson is a threat to break a big play every time he touches the ball.

Philadelphia Eagles The Eagles are the definition of an opportunistic defense. They finished seventh in fantasy points (Athlon scoring) among D/STs. Philadelphia generated 26 turnovers (10th in the NFL) and most important, had a total of five defensive and special teams touchdowns. Fletcher Cox and Brandon Graham are the key playmakers, but first-round pick Derek Barnett could have an impact as a pass rusher, along with free-agent acquisition Chris Long. If second-round pick Sidney Jones can recover from an Achilles tear, he and fellow rookie Rasul Douglas will help bolster the secondary.

New England Patriots The Patriots were a top-10 fantasy D/ST last season thanks to a league-low 15.6 points per game allowed. New England lost defensive linemen Jabaal Sheard (Colts) and Chris Long (Eagles) in free agency, but younger players Trey Flowers (team-high 7.0 sacks) and rookie Derek Rivers (No. 83 overall) are ready and hungry to make an impact. The big change will be in the secondary, with the Patriots paying Stephen Gilmore a lot of money to team with Malcolm Butler at cornerback. New England also re-signed linebacker Dont'a Hightower to anchor the middle. And when has it been wise to doubt a Bill Belichick-coached defense?

Jacksonville Jaguars The Jaguars' defensive makeover continued this offseason with the team signing Pro Bowl defensive lineman Calais Campbell and defensive backs A.J. Bouye and Barry Church in free agency. The linebacking corps is strong with Paul Posluszny and Telvin Smith as the leaders and Myles Jack ready to take a step forward. The secondary will look different with Johnathan Cyprien, Prince Amukamara and Davon House having moved on, but the combination of the newcomers and the continued development of safety/corner Jalen Ramsey leaves the back end in good, if not better, shape. Even with all of the changes, don't be surprised if the Jags D/ST emerges as a reliable fantasy option at some point this season.

Houston Texans To say the Texans D/ST was a fantasy disappointment in 2016 is an understatement. The No. 1-ranked D/ST entering the season, Houston finished 18th in fantasy points (Athlon scoring) with only 17 total takeaways and 31 sacks. Obviously the absence of three-time NFL Defensive Player of the Year J.J. Watt was a huge factor, and if Watt is healthy, then his return could have a significant impact. But it's also asking a little too much to expect Watt to turn this from a middle-of-the-pack fantasy option back into an elite one, at least right away. Houston could reclaim its status as one of the top fantasy D/STs, but let someone else assume the risk.

Cincinnati Bengals Featured in the "Going Up" section in this space last year, the Bengals went from a preseason top-10 ranking to finishing 23rd in fantasy points (Athlon scoring). Cincinnati had the second-most interceptions in the NFL (along with four other teams) with 17 but managed to recover just three fumbles the entire season. The pass rush (33 sacks) also was inconsistent, and the Bengals didn't score a single touchdown on defense or special teams. These are the categories that matter the most in fantasy, and with the team signing just one free agent (LB Kevin Minter) and focusing more on offense in the draft, this feels like a transition year for the Bengals defense.

Washington Redskins On paper, the Redskins D/ST could be in the "Up" section considering the team spent more than half of its draft picks (six of 10) on defensive players after investing heavily on that side of the ball in free agency. While the additions of veteran linebacker Zach Brown, first-round pick Jonathan Allen and others should certainly help, how big of an impact all these newcomers can have remains to be seen. Washington finished 21st in fantasy points (Athlon scoring) last season, but it could take some time for this unit to come together. It's probably safest to leave the Redskins D/ST on the waiver wire and take the "wait and see" approach.

Buffalo Bills The Bills finished a respectable 15th in fantasy points (Athlon scoring) among D/STs last season and hired former Carolina Panthers defensive coordinator Sean McDermott as their new head coach. But McDermott is switching the Bills to a 4-3 alignment, which could lead to some growing pains early. In addition, top cornerback Stephon Gillmore and linebacker Zach Brown, the team's leading tackler in 2016, left in free agency, so this unit will have to replace some key players. Buffalo drafted LSU cornerback Tre'Davious White in the first round, but it may be too much to ask him to be a shutdown corner as a rookie. The combination of a new scheme and new pieces may result in the Bills D/ST taking a step back fantasy-wise this season.

2017 AFC PREDICTIONS

PLAYOFFS

AFC PLAYOFF SEEDING

1. New England
2. Pittsburgh
3. Oakland
4. Tennessee
5. Kansas City
6. Baltimore

WILD CARD

Oakland over Baltimore
Kansas City over Tennessee

DIVISIONAL ROUND

New England over Kansas City
Pittsburgh over Oakland

AFC CHAMPIONSHIP

New England over Pittsburgh

SUPER BOWL LII

New England over Green Bay

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AFC POWER RANKINGS

1. New England
2. Pittsburgh
3. Oakland
4. Kansas City
5. Tennessee
6. Baltimore
7. Denver
8. Miami
9. Houston
10. Buffalo
11. L.A. Chargers
12. Indianapolis
13. Cincinnati
14. Jacksonville
15. N.Y. Jets
16. Cleveland

AFC EAST

1. New England Patriots
The defending champs loaded up with veteran acquisitions for another title run.

2. Miami Dolphins
A playoff team in 2016, the Dolphins still don't look like a real threat to the Pats.

3. Buffalo Bills
Sean McDermott simultaneously trying to change the culture and win now.

4. New York Jets
After a disappointing showing in 2016, Jets are in for a full-blown rebuild.

AFC SOUTH

1. Tennessee Titans
Are the Titans ready to take the next step and return to the playoffs?

2. Houston Texans
Not much has changed: Poor QB play may submarine a great defense.

3. Indianapolis Colts
Have they done enough to keep Andrew Luck healthy for a full season?

4. Jacksonville Jaguars
Young talent keeps piling up, but Blake Bortles will make or break the Jags.

AFC NORTH

1. Pittsburgh Steelers
If the stars stay healthy, the Steelers may be the biggest threat to the Patriots.

2. Baltimore Ravens
Big changes could be coming if John Harbaugh can't lead a playoff run.

3. Cincinnati Bengals
Veterans who led the way to the playoffs keep leaving town.

4. Cleveland Browns
Dawg Pound has to hope second-round QB DeShone Kizer is the answer.

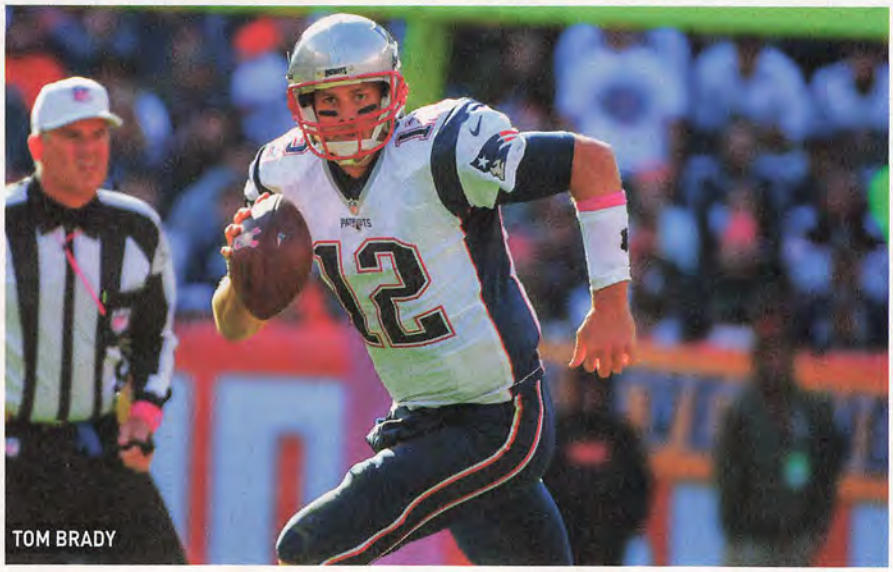
AFC WEST

1. Oakland Raiders
A healthy Derek Carr and some improvement on defense are a must.

2. Kansas City Chiefs
Alex Smith may need postseason wins to keep Patrick Mahomes II on sidelines.

3. Denver Broncos
Can Paxton Lynch wrestle the quarterback job away from Trevor Siemian?

4. Los Angeles Chargers
A new coach in Anthony Lynn and a new home in Los Angeles.


TOM BRADY

Brady: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Carr: Peter Brouillet

AFC COORDINATOR CAROUSEL

BUFFALO BILLS
Offensive Coordinator
Old: Anthony Lynn **New:** Rick Dennison
Dennison arrives after two seasons in the same position with Denver, including the Super Bowl season of 2015. Quarterback Tyrod Taylor is limited as a passer, but the Bills' status as the best rushing team in the NFL last season provides a nice starting point for a coach who likes to use the run game to set up the pass.

BUFFALO BILLS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Rob Ryan **New:** Leslie Frazier
Frazier enters his fourth stint as an NFL defensive coordinator after spending last season as the defensive backs coach in Baltimore. Under Frazier's tutelage, the Ravens ranked ninth in the NFL in pass defense and had a league-leading 18 interceptions. Frazier was head coach in Minnesota from 2010-13, posting a record of 21–32–1 with one playoff berth.

CLEVELAND BROWNS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Ray Horton **New:** Gregg Williams
Williams most recently was the Rams' defensive coordinator and should inject some attitude into a listless Browns defense. He'll implement a transition from a 3-4 to a 4-3, which could lead to some growing pains, and he still carries personal baggage from Bountygate. Head coach Hue Jackson is putting his trust in a coordinator who didn't do enough to keep Rams coach Jeff Fisher from getting fired.

DENVER BRONCOS
Offensive Coordinator
Old: Rick Dennison **New:** Mike McCoy
It's a homecoming of sorts for McCoy, who was the Broncos' offensive coordinator from 2009-12. Even during a failed tenure as Chargers head coach (one playoff appearance), McCoy displayed his offensive acumen, fielding a passing attack that ranked fourth, 10th, fourth and eighth, respectively, in his four seasons. He'll fill a key role for first-time head coach Vance Joseph, whose specialty is defense.

DENVER BRONCOS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Wade Phillips **New:** Joe Woods
Woods has served as defensive backs coach in Denver for two seasons, and his "No-Fly Zone" defensive backfield yielded the first All-Pro cornerback tandem in league history in Aqib Talib and Chris Harris Jr. Woods' task is to maintain rather than rebuild a Broncos defense that has ranked among the league's best over the last three seasons.

HOUSTON TEXANS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Romeo Crennel **New:** Mike Vrabel
Crennel guided the NFL's top-ranked defense in 2016, earning him a promotion of sorts to assistant head coach that cleared the way for rising star Vrabel to take the defensive reins while fending off interest in the 41-year-old from the Chargers and Redskins. Vrabel has been the Texans' linebackers coach for the last three seasons.

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: John Pagano **New:** Gus Bradley
Bradley went 14–48 in four seasons as Jacksonville's head coach, but he had a relatively successful stint as the Seahawks defensive coordinator prior to his Jags tenure. He'll implement a transition from a 3-4 to a 4-3, but he possesses the ultimate foundational piece up front in Defensive Rookie of the Year Joey Bosa.

MIAMI DOLPHINS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Vance Joseph **New:** Matt Burke
The well-traveled Burke made stops in Tennessee, Detroit and Cincinnati before landing in Miami as linebackers coach in 2016 and getting the coordinator job when Vance Joseph left to become the Broncos' head coach. Burke has a reputation as a players' coach, and he already possesses a comfort level in Miami. His job is cut out for him after the Dolphins allowed a franchise-worst 6,122 total yards in 2016.

NEW YORK JETS
Offensive Coordinator
Old: Chan Gailey **New:** John Morton
This is Morton's first NFL coordinator job, but he has worked under Jon Gruden, Sean Payton, Jim Harbaugh and Pete Carroll. Most recently, he was wide receivers coach for the Saints, where he mentored a group that included rookie Michael Thomas, who had 92 receptions and nine touchdowns in 2016. Morton inherits the last thing a rookie coordinator needs — uncertainty at quarterback.

OAKLAND RAIDERS
Offensive Coordinator
Old: Bill Musgrave **New:** Todd Downing
Once the Raiders' season ended, head coach Jack Del Rio moved quickly to promote Downing, a rising star in the coaching ranks, to offensive coordinator after a stint as quarterbacks coach. That continuity should serve both Downing and the Raiders well. His rapport with quarterback Derek Carr has already yielded big benefits for a team on the rise.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR
Derek Carr, QB, Oakland

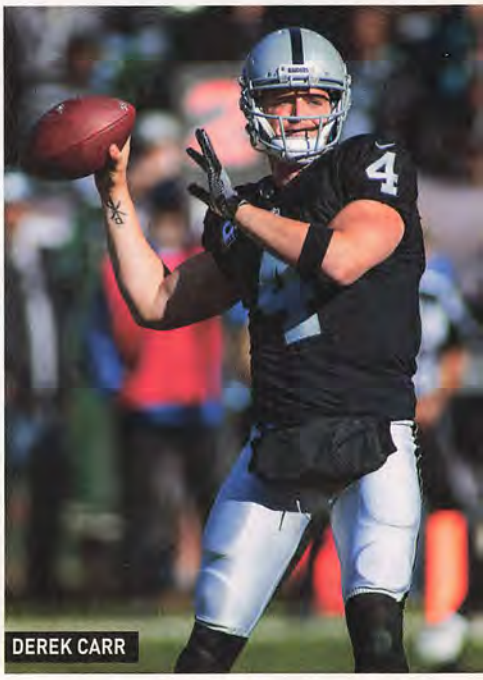
DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR
Von Miller, LB, Denver

COMEBACK PLAYER OF THE YEAR
J.J. Watt, DE, Houston

OFFENSIVE ROOKIE OF THE YEAR
Mike Williams, WR, L.A. Chargers

DEFENSIVE ROOKIE OF THE YEAR
Jamal Adams, SS, N.Y. Jets

COACH OF THE YEAR
Mike Mularkey, Tennessee


DEREK CARR

BUFFALO BILLS

AFC EAST FORECAST

3

The Buffalo Bills haven't been to the NFL playoffs for 17 consecutive seasons, the longest active postseason drought in North American professional sports. So why should 2017 be the season this dubious streak is snapped? Because maybe the odds are in the Bills' favor.

Terry Pegula, who fired coach Rex Ryan and general manager Doug Whaley in a span of four months, is now working on his third head coach and second general manager in just two-plus seasons of ownership. New coach Sean McDermott, the former Philadelphia and Carolina defensive coordinator, has been handed unprecedented power. The expectation is that with a little more discipline, accountability and structure, the Bills can get over the hump. Under the fun-loving Ryan, the Bills dropped nine games by a seven points or less and went 8–8 and 7–9.

Worst-case scenario for McDermott in his rookie year? Buffalo grabs another top-10 draft pick and, coupled with Kansas City's No. 1 obtained in a trade, he finds his franchise quarterback in a deep 2018 class. Just don't utter the word "tank."

OFFENSE The Bills will look to improve on a unit that is lacking stars but ranked first in rushing offense and tied for 10th in scoring last season.

With few appealing options on the free-agent market, the Bills had little choice but to bring back quarterback Tyrod Taylor for a third year under a more cap-friendly contract. It was a prudent move as Buffalo's new coaching staff under coordinator Rick Dennison will not have to waste valuable months staging a competition, and young prospects Cardale Jones and rookie Nathan Peterman can develop without any pressure. The Bills signed veteran T.J. Yates in case neither Jones nor Peterman can secure the backup job.

Taylor has been an electrifying and productive — if not winning — quarterback with a 14–14 record. He is limited as a pure passer, but his top-10 QBR ranking means he contributes in other ways, namely as the NFL's top rushing quarterback. He's rushed for 1,148 yards and 10 TDs for Buffalo, and his ability to avoid turnovers (six interceptions in 2016) is another positive.

McDermott was around dual-threat QBs in Philadelphia with Donovan McNabb and in Carolina with Cam Newton. Dennison, who worked with Taylor in Baltimore, runs an offense that will utilize many of Taylor's skills. Can this be the staff that gets him to a new level? "It's a player-friendly playbook, and I know I'm excited about it," says Taylor.

Taylor will need a full season out of wide receiver Sammy Watkins, who had two foot surgeries last year and was limited to 28 catches. Second-round pick Zay Jones, who caught an FBS record 399 passes for East Carolina, should be a nice complement to Watkins, along with veteran free agent Philly Brown. Tight end Charles Clay, who led Buffalo with 57 catches for 552 yards, is also begging to be used more. Watkins' health is everything, though. The No. 4 pick in 2014 is at a crossroads of his career if he can't stay on the field.

Taking some of the pressure off Taylor is a rushing attack that has led the NFL two years running. LeSean McCoy is still an elite cut-back runner who topped the 1,200-yard mark for the fourth time in his career. He had 50 catches and earned his fifth Pro Bowl nod. Losing top backup Mike Gillislee (5.7 yards per carry) to New England as a restricted free agent has opened a spot for second-year man Jonathan Williams. Two quality fullbacks were added as free agents, Patrick DiMarco and Mike Tolbert.

McCoy and company will run behind a quality line. Cordy Glenn, Jordan Mills, Richie Incognito, John Miller and center Eric Wood return up front, and second-round pick Dion Dawkins and veteran free agent Vladimir Ducasse upgrade the depth. Wood, one of the NFL's best players at the pivot, is coming off a broken leg, but he's bounced back strong from injuries before.

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNERS: Kim and Terry Pegula
PRESIDENT: Russ Brandon
STADIUM: New Era Field (71,870)
SURFACE: A-Turf Titan 50
WEBSITE: www.buffalobills.com
TICKETS: 877-BB-TICKS
TRAINING CAMP: St. John Fisher College (Rochester, N.Y.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Sean McDermott
RECORD WITH TEAM: 0–0
CAREER RECORD: 0–0
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Rick Dennison
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Leslie Frazier
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Danny Crossman
QUARTERBACKS: David Culley
RUNNING BACKS: Kelly Skipper
WIDE RECEIVERS: Phil McGeoghan
TIGHT ENDS: Rob Boras
OFFENSIVE LINE: Juan Castillo
DEFENSIVE LINE: Mike Waufle
LINEBACKERS: Bob Babich
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Gill Byrd

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Sept. 17	at Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Sept. 24	Denver	1:00	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Oct. 1	at Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Oct. 8	at Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
BYE							
Oct. 22	Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Oct. 29	Oakland	1:00	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Nov. 2	at N.Y. Jets (Thu.)	8:25	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Nov. 12	New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Nov. 19	at L.A. Chargers	4:05	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Nov. 26	at Kansas City	1:00	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Dec. 3	New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Dec. 10	Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Dec. 17	Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Dec. 24	at New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Dec. 31	at Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)

W. E. Smith III

RB LESEAN MCCOY

2016 RESULTS (7-9)

Sept. 11	at Baltimore	L	7-13
Sept. 15	N.Y. Jets	L	31-37
Sept. 25	Arizona	W	33-18
Oct. 2	at New England	W	16-0
Oct. 9	at L.A. Rams	W	30-19
Oct. 16	San Francisco	W	45-16
Oct. 23	at Miami	L	25-28
Oct. 30	New England	L	25-41
Nov. 7	at Seattle	L	25-31
Nov. 20	at Cincinnati	W	16-12
Nov. 27	Jacksonville	W	28-21
Dec. 4	at Oakland	L	24-38
Dec. 11	Pittsburgh	L	20-27
Dec. 18	Cleveland	W	33-13
Dec. 24	Miami (ot)	L	31-34
Jan. 1	at N.Y. Jets	L	10-30

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Tyrod Taylor	436	269	3,023	17	6
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
LeSean McCoy	234	1,267	5.4	13	
Mike Gillislee	101	577	5.7	8	
Tyrod Taylor	95	580	6.1	6	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Charles Clay	57	552	9.7	4	
Robert Woods	51	613	12.0	1	
LeSean McCoy	50	356	7.1	1	
Marquise Goodwin	29	431	14.9	3	
Sammy Watkins	28	430	15.4	2	

KICKING: Dan Carpenter, 19-25 FGs, 40-45 PAT, 97 points
TACKLES: Zach Brown, 149; Preston Brown, 139
SACKS: Lorenzo Alexander, 12.5; Jerry Hughes, 6.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Stephon Gilmore, 5; Two tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	347.7	16	8
Rushing	164.4	1	1
Passing	189.8	30	16
Scoring	24.9	T10	T5
Third Down %	40.9	13	6
Punt Returns	11.2	6	2
Kick Returns	21.3	19	10

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	357.0	19	10
Rushing	133.1	29	14
Passing	223.9	6	4
Scoring	23.6	T16	T8
Interceptions	12	T18	T10
Sacks	39	8	3
Turnover Differential	+6	T7	4

TYROD TAYLOR

DEFENSE This was Ryan's area of expertise, but he never got it right. Fielding units that ranked 19th in yards allowed two consecutive seasons hastened his exodus.

Now it's McDermott's turn. He, too, is a defensive coach, and it's up to him and his coordinator, former Vikings head coach Leslie Frazier, to deal with the Super Bowl champion New England Patriots and Tom Brady twice a year. To that end, the Bills will return to a pure 4-3 scheme after struggling to make Ryan's complex hybrid looks work.

"It allows us to kind of play to our strengths," end Jerry Hughes says. "Four guys coming off the ball creating havoc, closing in that pocket, putting a lot of pressure on QBs rather than just allowing him to stand back there and pick us apart."

The key question: Do the Bills have the personnel to make that work? Only four starters remain from Buffalo's No. 4 defense of three seasons ago, and there are no Luke Kuechlys, Greg Hardys or Josh Normans — players McDermott had when he fielded top-10 defenses in Carolina.

Still, the Bills have a very good base, starting with the front four of Hughes, Shaq Lawson, Marcell Dareus and Kyle Williams. Hughes is a gifted pass rusher who has 31 sacks over the last three seasons. Lawson, Buffalo's No. 1 pick in 2016 who got a late start after shoulder surgery, was a dominant player at Clemson and showed flashes his rookie year. Dareus and Williams form one of the NFL's best 1-2 tackle combinations. After playing just eight games due to suspensions and injury in 2016, Dareus needs a big season. Williams, 34, put off retirement after hearing McDermott espouse discipline and hard work. Second-year man Adolphus Washington, who made 11 starts as a rookie, has Pro Bowl potential himself and is learning from two of the best.

The linebacker corps is led by veteran Lorenzo Alexander, who resurrected his career with 12.5 sacks and earned a two-year deal. He provides leadership in the locker room. Others to watch are Preston Brown (139 tackles) and former Alabama star Reggie Ragland, Buffalo's second-round pick last season who lost his entire rookie season to a torn ACL. Rookie Matt Milano will challenge for a spot in the rotation.

The secondary, a big part of McDermott's scheme, has been overhauled, triggered by the loss of cornerback Stephon Gilmore to the rival Patriots for a massive $40 million guaranteed contract. First-round pick Tre'Davious White should start opposite Ronald Darby at corner. Second-year pro Kevon Seymour and veteran Shareece White are very good special package players. Micah Hyde and either free agent Jordan Poyer or veteran Colt Anderson will be the two new starting safeties after the Bills parted ways with Aaron Williams and Corey Graham. Hyde, who made 33 starts for the Packers with eight picks, was Buffalo's top free-agent signing ($14 million guarantee) and is a key building block for McDermott.

SPECIALISTS Stephen Hauschka replaces a fading Dan Carpenter at placekicker. Hauschka has kicked for Denver, Baltimore and Seattle — winning a Super Bowl with the Seahawks — and has a fine 87.2 percent career percentage. Punter Colton Schmidt (42.4-yard average, 20 inside the 20), a great free-agent find who has mastered the challenging Buffalo weather conditions, returns for his fourth season. Brandon Tate had a solid year returning punts and kickoffs, but many candidates will be tested out, including White, a terrific punt returner in college.

FINAL ANALYSIS Regime changes always inspire optimism, but the fact is that five previous GM changes and six coaching changes during Buffalo's 17-year playoff drought were not the answer. McDermott's methodical, disciplined approach isn't a magic wand. But if he produces the two to three wins the Bills have consistently needed to make the playoffs, he'll be given a bust outside New Era Field.

W. E. Smith III

2017 VETERAN BILLS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
7 Jones, Cardale	QB	6-5	250	1	Ohio State	D4-16	D4-Buf-16
5 Taylor, Tyrod	QB	6-1	215	6	Virginia Tech	FA-15	D6-Bal-11
8 Woodrum, Josh	QB	6-3	231	1	Liberty	FA-17	FA-NYG-16
9 Yates, T.J.	QB	6-4	217	6	North Carolina	FA-Mia-17	D5-Hou-11
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
22 Banyard, Joe	RB	5-10	221	4	UTEP	FA-17	FA-Jac-12
42 DiMarco, Patrick	FB	6-1	234	5	South Carolina	FA-Atl-17	FA-LAC-11
25 McCoy, LeSean	RB	5-11	208	8	Pittsburgh	T-Phi-15	D2-Phi-09
44 O'Neal, Cedric	RB	5-10	215	1	Valdosta State	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
35 Tolbert, Mike	FB	5-9	250	9	Coastal Carolina	FA-Car-17	FA-LAC-08
31 Williams, Jonathan	RB	6-0	223	1	Arkansas	D5-16	D5-Buf-16
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
86 Annen, Blake	TE	6-4	247	2	Cincinnati	FA-15	FA-Phi-14
10 Brown, Philly	WR	5-11	190	3	Ohio State	FA-Car-17	FA-Car-14
17 Butler, Jeremy	WR	6-2	213	3	Tennessee-Martin	FA-LAC-17	FA-Bal-14
85 Clay, Charles	TE	6-3	255	6	Tulsa	FA-15	D6-Mia-11
81 Holmes, Andre	WR	6-4	210	5	Hillsdale	FA-Oak-17	FA-Min-11
13 Lewis, Dezmin	WR	6-4	214	1	Central Arkansas	D7-15	D7-Buf-15
18 Listenbee, Kolby	WR	6-1	183	1	TCU	D6a-16	D6a-Buf-16
84 O'Leary, Nick	TE	6-3	252	1	Florida State	D6b-15	D6b-Buf-15
19 Powell, Walter	WR	6-0	189	2	Murray State	FA-15	D6-Ari-14
15 Tate, Brandon	WR	6-1	195	8	North Carolina	FA-16	D3-NE-09
82 Thomas, Logan	TE	6-6	250	2	Virginia Tech	FA-16	D4-Ari-14
14 Watkins, Sammy	WR	6-1	211	3	Clemson	D1-14	D1-Buf-14
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
62 Ducasse, Vladimir	G	6-5	329	7	Massachusetts	FA-Bal-17	D2-NYJ-10
77 Glenn, Cordy	T	6-6	345	5	Georgia	D2-12	D2-Buf-12
72 Groy, Ryan	G	6-5	320	3	Wisconsin	FA-15	FA-Chi-14
66 Henderson, Seantrel	T	6-7	331	3	Miami	D7b-14	D7b-Buf-14
64 Incognito, Richie	G	6-3	319	10	Nebraska	FA-15	D3-LAR-05
60 Jefferson, Cameron	T	6-5	317	1	Arkansas	FA-17	FA-Chi-15
71 Kouandjio, Cyrus	T	6-7	322	3	Alabama	D2-14	D2-Buf-14
67 Lewis, Patrick	C	6-1	311	4	Texas A&M	FA-16	FA-GB-13
76 Miller, John	G	6-2	303	2	Louisville	D3-15	D3-Buf-15
79 Mills, Jordan	T	6-5	316	4	Louisiana Tech	FA-15	D5-Chi-13
61 Mudge, Jordan	OL	6-4	300	1	Nevada	FA-17	FA-Buf-17
74 Ola, Michael	T	6-5	312	3	Hampton	FA-16	FA-Mia-14
70 Wood, Eric	C	6-4	310	8	Louisville	D1b-09	D1b-Buf-09
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
98 Coleman, Deandre	DT	6-5	341	3	California	FA-16	FA-Jac-14
99 Dareus, Marcell	DT	6-3	331	6	Alabama	D1-11	D1-Buf-11
56 Davis, Ryan	DE	6-2	270	4	Bethune-Cookman	FA-Dal-17	FA-Jac-12
55 Hughes, Jerry	DE	6-2	254	7	TCU	T-Ind-13	D1-Ind-10
90 Lawson, Shaq	DE	6-3	267	1	Clemson	D1-16	D1-Buf-16
96 Metz, Jake	DE	6-7	265	1	Shippensburg	FA-17	FA-Phi-16
91 Seau, Ian	DE	6-2	250	1	Nevada	FA-17	FA-LAR-16
54 Valles, Max	DE	6-4	250	1	Virginia	FA-15	D6-Oak-15
92 Washington, Adolphus	DT	6-4	295	1	Ohio State	D3-16	D3-Buf-16
95 Williams, Kyle	DT	6-1	303	11	LSU	D5a-06	D5a-Buf-06
94 Worthy, Jerel	DE	6-2	308	3	Michigan State	FA-15	D2-GB-12
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
49 Albright, Bryson	LB	6-5	225	1	Miami (OH)	FA-16	FA-Buf-16
57 Alexander, Lorenzo	LB	6-1	245	10	California	FA-Oak-16	FA-Car-05
52 Brown, Preston	LB	6-1	251	3	Louisville	D3-14	D3-Buf-14
50 Humber, Ramon	LB	5-11	232	8	North Dakota St.	FA-16	FA-Ind-09
48 Lindsey, Jacob	LB	6-2	220	1	Harvard	FA-17	FA-Buf-17
59 Ragland, Reggie	LB	6-2	252	1	Alabama	D2-16	D2-Buf-16
49 Sylvestre, Junior	LB	6-0	242	1	Toledo	FA-17	FA-Ind-15
75 Yarbrough, Eddie	LB	6-3	259	1	Wyoming	FA-17	FA-Den-16
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
33 Anderson, Colt	S	5-10	195	7	Montana	FA-Ind-16	FA-Min-09
30 Cromartie, Marcus	CB	6-0	195	3	Wisconsin	FA-SF-17	FA-LAC-13
28 Darby, Ronald	CB	5-11	193	2	Florida State	D2-15	D2-Buf-15
31 Dowling, Jonathan	DB	6-3	190	2	Western Kentucky	FA-15	D7-Oak-14
36 Elston, Trae	DB	5-11	193	1	Ole Miss	W-Cle-17	FA-NO-16
40 Gaines, Charles	CB	5-10	180	2	Louisville	FA-16	D6-Cle-15
37 Gary, Shamiel	S	6-0	217	2	Oklahoma State	FA-16	FA-NE-14
23 Hyde, Micah	DB	6-0	197	4	Iowa	FA-GB-17	D5a-GB-13
38 James II, Charles	CB	5-9	185	3	Charleston So.	W-Ind-17	FA-NYG-13
24 Johnson, Leonard	CB	5-10	200	5	Iowa State	FA-Car-17	FA-TB-12
43 Powell, Joe	DB	6-2	205	1	Globe Tech	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
21 Poyer, Jordan	DB	6-0	191	4	Oregon State	FA-Cle-17	D7-Phi-13
39 Roberson, Marcus	CB	6-0	194	3	Florida	FA-16	FA-LAR-14
29 Seymour, Kevon	CB	6-0	185	1	USC	D6b-16	D6b-Buf-16
41 Sylve, Bradley	DB	5-11	180	1	Alabama	FA-17	FA-Buf-17
20 Wright, Shareece	CB	5-11	184	6	USC	FA-Bal-17	D3b-LAC-11
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
69 Ferguson, Reid	LS	6-2	244	1	LSU	FA-16	FA-Buf-16
4 Hauschka, Steven	K	6-4	210	9	NC State	FA-Sea-17	FA-Min-08
6 Schmidt, Colton	P	5-11	224	3	California-Davis	FA-14	FA-SF-13

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	14	Sammy Watkins	10	Philly Brown
WR	11	Zay Jones (R)	13	Dez Lewis
LT	77	Cordy Glenn	71	Cyrus Kouandjio
LG	64	Richie Incognito	62	Vladimir Ducasse
C	70	Eric Wood	67	Patrick Lewis
RG	76	John Miller	72	Ryan Groy
RT	79	Jordan Mills	73	Dion Dawkins (R)
TE	85	Charles Clay	84	Nick O'Leary
QB	5	Tyrod Taylor	7	Cardale Jones
FB	42	Patrick DiMarco	35	Mike Tolbert
RB	25	LeSean McCoy	31	Jonathan Williams

DEFENSE

DE	90	Shaq Lawson	94	Jerel Worthy
DT	99	Marcell Dareus	92	Adolphus Washington
DT	95	Kyle Williams	98	Deandre Coleman
DE	55	Jerry Hughes	56	Ryan Davis
OLB	50	Ramon Humber	58	Matt Milano (R)
MLB	59	Reggie Ragland	52	Preston Brown
OLB	57	Lorenzo Alexander	75	Eddie Yarborough
CB	28	Ronald Darby	30	Marcus Cromartie
CB	27	Tre'Davious White (R)	29	Kevon Seymour
SS	23	Micah Hyde	31	Jonathan Dowling
FS	33	Colt Anderson	21	Jordan Poyer

SPECIALISTS

K	4	Stephen Hauschka	KR	15	Brandon Tate
P	6	Colton Schmidt	PR	27	Tre'Davious White (R)

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
WR	Philly Brown	Carolina
FB	Patrick DiMarco	Atlanta
OG	Vladimir Ducasse	Baltimore
K	Steven Hauschka	Seattle
S	Micah Hyde	Green Bay
FS	Jordan Poyer	Cleveland
FB	Mike Tolbert	Carolina
CB	Shareece Wright	Baltimore

KEY LOSSES −

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
LB	Zach Brown	Washington
K	Dan Carpenter	Free Agent
FB	Jerome Felton	Free Agent
RB	Mike Gillislee	New England
CB	Stephon Gilmore	New England
S	Corey Graham	Free agent
CB	Nickell Robey-Coleman	L.A. Rams
WR	Robert Woods	L.A. Rams

SCOUTING THE BILLS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP BUFFALO "Rex Ryan's public proclamations and outward confidence did not carry over to winning results, and while the players enjoyed him, the lack of discipline and overall direction plagued this team over the past two seasons. ... Sean McDermott, an Andy Reid/Jim Johnson disciple who reinvented himself in Carolina under Ron Rivera, will be expected to establish a culture of accountability, and he gained significant power with the firing of GM Doug Whaley the day after the draft. ... Tyrod Taylor is good enough to play but not good enough to win. And yet, the Bills are stuck with him for 2017. ... Shady McCoy bounced back last year but is another season older and always a hamstring pull away from being on the shelf. ... The line is capable on the left side with Cordy Glenn and Richie Incognito, but the Bills allowed 46 sacks despite a mobile quarterback. ... Sammy Watkins has been a major disappointment due to injuries, and his fifth-year option for 2018 was not exercised. ... The defense took a huge step back in 2016 but could potentially surprise with a healthy return of defensive end Shaq Lawson and linebacker Reggie Ragland. ... Marcell Dareus needs to become a more consistent force in the middle, and maybe McDermott can bring it out of him. ... Ronald Darby has established himself as a bona fide corner, but Stephon Gilmore walked in free agency, so they dropped down in the first round to choose LSU's Tre'Davious White. ... With more attention to detail, the Bills should be better, but not sure how this team gets to the playoffs."

BUFFALO IN THE *DRAFT* B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Tre'Davious White	CB	5-11	192	LSU
2.	Zay Jones	WR	6-1	197	East Carolina
2.	Dion Dawkins	OL	6-4	314	Temple
5.	Matt Milano	LB	6-1	225	Boston College
5.	Nathan Peterman	QB	6-2	225	Pittsburgh
6.	Tanner Vallejo	LB	6-1	228	Boise State

This draft could be the gift that keeps on giving for the Bills, who are due for some good news. Three draft-day trades landed them Tre'Davious White, Zay Jones and Dion Dawkins, three players who will challenge for starting spots. Jones, who had an FBS-record 399 career catches, has a shot at stepping right in opposite Sammy Watkins. White was also a dangerous return man at LSU. Peterman, who beat national champ Clemson as a senior, brought great value in the fifth round. He played in a pro-style offense at Pittsburgh. The big plum was picking up an extra first-round pick in 2018 in a trade with Kansas City.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

HOMECOMING Two road games will be extra special for new Bills coach Sean McDermott, a Week 2 game at Carolina and a Week 12 contest at Kansas City. McDermott coached six seasons for the Panthers, including their 2015 Super Bowl season. The Chiefs are coached by his mentor in Philadelphia, Andy Reid. That game will have implications on the 2018 draft after Buffalo acquired the Chiefs' first-round pick in a trade this year that brought QB Patrick Mahomes II to K.C. and will define the remainder of Reid's illustrious career.

A VETERAN'S VIEW Guard Richie Incognito resurrected his career under former coach Rex Ryan and was saddened to see him fired. But he has bought fully into what McDermott is about, especially after going through a few offseason practices. "He brings a lot of energy," Incognito says. "We've got music playing in the hallways. We've got music playing in the lunchroom. The juices are flowing. ... We're flying around (in practice). There were some points where I was running — I didn't even know where I was running, I just made sure my butt was in gear."

HISTORIC RUN GAME It will be hard for the Bills to improve on last season's performance running the ball, led by LeSean McCoy, Tyrod Taylor and Mike Gillislee. Those three combined for 2,424 yards and 27 touchdowns. The Bills led the NFL in rushing yards per game (164.4), and their 5.35 yards-per-carry average was a franchise record.

STATISTICS ARE FOR LOSERS Buffalo led the NFL in rushing, ranked third in the AFC in sacks and tied for seventh in turnover differential with a plus-6. It added up to a 7–9 record, giving credence to the saying "There are lies, damn lies and statistics."

ZO ON THE GO Add Lorenzo Alexander to the list off all-time best free-agent signings. He won a starting job at linebacker for the Bills and recorded a career-high 12.5 sacks, 76 tackles, 22 QB hits, six passes defended, three forced fumbles and one interception en route to the Pro Bowl. That earned him a two-year deal. "I am always blessed to be able to play in this league whether it is making the minimum or having a decent deal that is beyond the minimum. I just love being able to play this game," says Alexander, one of the game's truly good guys.

GLUE FOR HANDS Bills second-round pick Zay Jones caught 399 passes, an NCAA FBS career record, at East Carolina. "We hope he continues that," McDermott says. "They (incompletions) don't move the chains very often." Jones' dad, Robert, played linebacker for the Dallas Cowboys, winning three Super Bowl rings, two at the Bills' expense.

NO PASSING ON QBS The Bills are often criticized for not drafting quarterbacks, but they're starting to change. The selections of Ohio State's Cardale Jones in 2016 and Pittsburgh's Nathan Peterman in 2017 mark the first time they've taken QBs in consecutive years since 1985 and '86. That '85 pick turned out well — super sub Frank Reich.

DUAL ROLES Bills owner Terry Pegula also owns the Buffalo Sabres of the NHL. With both teams floundering, he fired the GMs and coaches of both teams in a span of four months and faced the challenge of putting the pieces back together. "I own the team, and they have to believe in us as owners, just like we have to try to believe in our players when we put them on the field," said Pegula when asked why fans should have confidence in him. "We're going to try to make the best decision we can in the future, and we've made big decisions all our lives."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

9.3 The Bills finished 31st in Adjusted Sack Rate, allowing 9.3 percent of their pass snaps to become sacks.

6.7 On runs at right end, the Bills' defense allowed a league-high 6.7 adjusted line yards per carry.

2.5 The Bills had the second-highest ratio of touchdowns to field goals in the NFL, scoring 2.5 touchdowns per field goal.

SAMMY WATKINS

White: Tom Lynn; Watkins: Peter Brouillet

MIAMI DOLPHINS

AFC EAST FORECAST

2

Long-time Miami fans know all about one-year NFL wonders — those teams that overachieve one season only to fall back the next. That's because the 2008 Dolphins fall in that category, plummeting from an 11–5 record and playoff appearance that year into a seven-season playoff drought that finally ended last season.

There is legitimate reason to believe the 2017 Dolphins can avoid the same fate thanks to the culture built by second-year head coach Adam Gase and a front office that has assembled Miami's most talented roster since the days of perennial postseason contention.

The Dolphins believe continuity is the key to success. Miami retained its two priority free agents in wide receiver Kenny Stills and defensive end Andre Branch. Defensive end Cameron Wake, linebacker Kiko Alonso and safety Reshad Jones all earned lucrative contract extensions. Miami added projected starters at middle linebacker (Lawrence Timmons), tight end (Julius Thomas), left guard (Ted Larsen) and safety (Nate Allen and T.J. McDonald) via trade and free agency. The draft yielded immediate contributors as well. The key now is whether all this can help Miami push New England for the AFC East crown.

OFFENSE When quarterback Ryan Tannehill's season ended in Week 14, Miami's hopes for a deep playoff run were dashed as well. After a rough start partially caused by growing pains in Gase's system, Tannehill rebounded to enjoy the best season of his career. Tannehill's biggest improvement came on the deep ball. He tied for the NFL lead with seven completions of 50-plus yards, and his 7.7 yards-per-completion average was a personal best.

The Dolphins and Tannehill opted against surgery on his partially torn ACL under the belief that rehabilitation and strengthening the muscles around his knee could prevent further damage. Still, nobody can know for sure until Tannehill takes the field again in game settings. And despite the strides made in 2016, there are lingering doubts about whether Tannehill can become a Super Bowl-caliber quarterback. But the only opinion that matters is Gase's. He stuck by Tannehill when fans were calling for backup Matt Moore after Miami's 1–4 start and has never shown signs of lessening his support.

Behind the scenes, Gase pushed heavily for Dolphins management to re-sign Stills. Those words carried heavy weight. Stills caught a career-high nine touchdown passes and averaged 17.3 yards per reception, which ranked third in the league. Jarvis Landry should be the next Dolphins wideout to cash in. Heading into a contract year, Landry remains Tannehill's most trusted target. He was among the league leaders in third-down grabs while becoming the sixth receiver in Dolphins history with back-to-back 1,000-yard seasons. Miami is counting on DeVante Parker to make more of an impact entering his third NFL season. If he doesn't, the Dolphins may pass on exercising the fifth-year option in his rookie contract.

At tight end, Thomas should provide Tannehill with a boost in the passing game provided he avoids the injury problems that made him a high-priced free-agent bust in Jacksonville. Anthony Fasano, who played in Miami from 2008-12, returns primarily as a blocker with Dion Sims having left for Chicago.

The running game progressed from a concern in the preseason to a strength by the end of the year. Jay Ajayi, who was left at home for the Week 1 opener because of a bad attitude, changed his tune and quickly surpassed Arian Foster as Miami's lead back. Ajayi finished with 1,272 yards. The next step for Ajayi is consistency. He finished with 79 or fewer yards in 12 games, including Miami's first-round playoff loss to Pittsburgh.

Ajayi should benefit from what the Dolphins believe will be an improved offensive line. Miami could have stuck with Branden Albert at left tackle but instead traded him to Jacksonville under the belief 2016 first-round pick Laremy Tunsil is ready to man the spot. To his credit, Tunsil has avoided the off-field problems that caused him to slide from being a potential top-five pick to No. 13 in his draft class. The Dolphins hope a

THE ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN/MANAGING GENERAL PARTNER: Stephen M. Ross
PRESIDENT/CEO: Tom Garfinkel
GENERAL MANAGER: Chris Grier
EXECUTIVE VP OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION: Mike Tannenbaum
STADIUM: Hard Rock Stadium (65,326)
SURFACE: Natural Grass
WEBSITE: www.miamidolphins.com
TICKETS: 888-FINS-TIX
TRAINING CAMP: Miami Dolphins Training Facility (Davie, Fla.)

THE COACHES

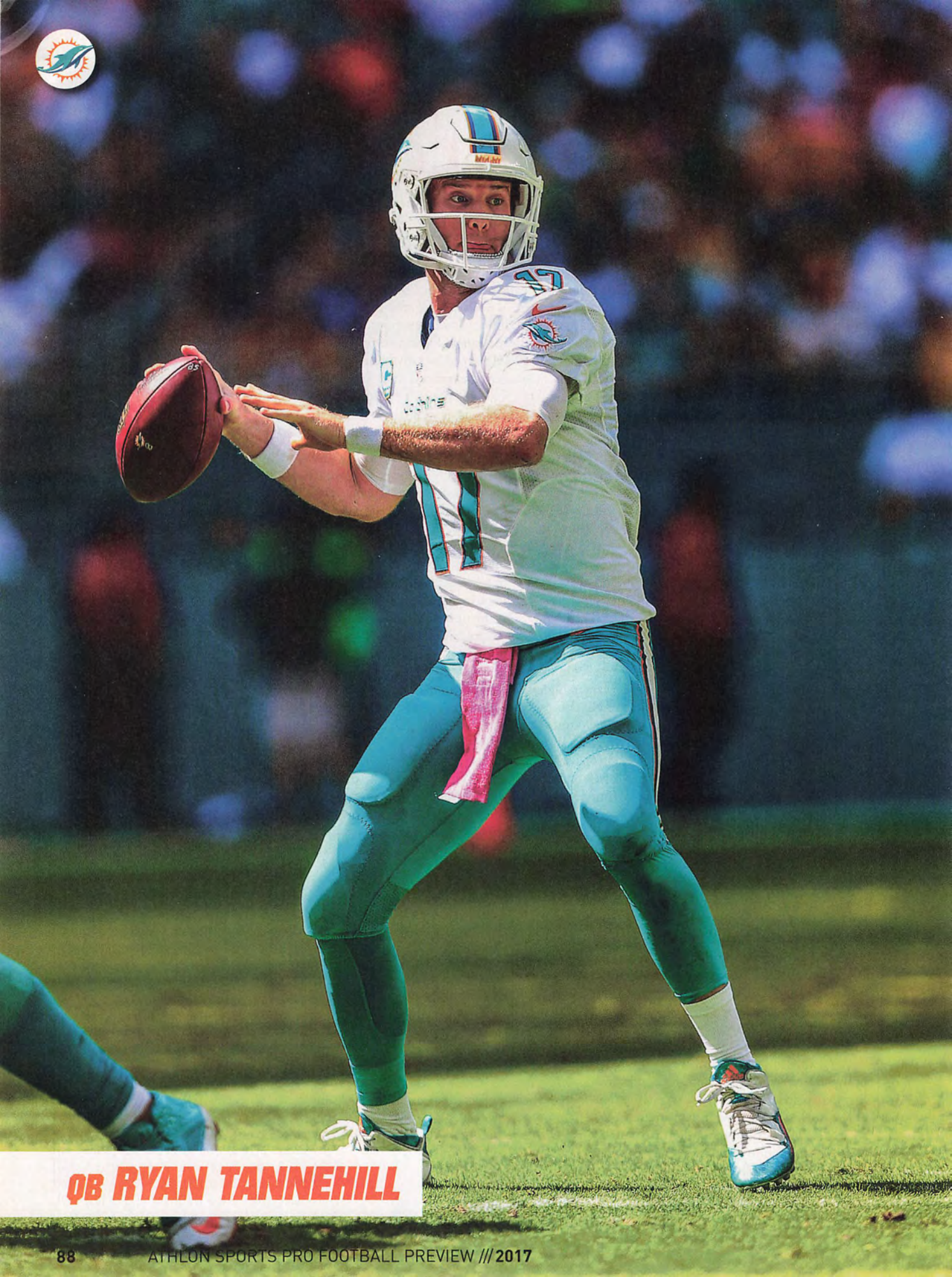
HEAD COACH: Adam Gase
RECORD WITH TEAM: 10–6
CAREER RECORD: 10–6
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Clyde Christensen
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Matt Burke
ASST. HEAD COACH/SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Darren Rizzi
ASST. HEAD COACH/LINEBACKERS: Frank Bush
QUARTERBACKS: Bo Hardegree
RUNNING BACKS: Danny Barrett
WIDE RECEIVERS: Shawn Jefferson
TIGHT ENDS: Shane Day
OFFENSIVE LINE: Chris Foerster
DEFENSIVE LINE: Terrell Williams
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Lou Anarumo

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2012	7
2013	8
2014	8
2015	6
2016	10

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Sept. 17	at L.A. Chargers	4:05	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Sept. 24	at N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Oct. 1	vs. New Orleans (London)	9:30 am	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Oct. 8	Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Oct. 15	at Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Oct. 22	N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Oct. 26	at Baltimore (Thu.)	8:25	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Nov. 5	Oakland	8:30	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Nov. 13	at Carolina (Mon.)	8:30	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
BYE							
Nov. 26	at New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Dec. 3	Denver	1:00	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Dec. 11	New England (Mon.)	8:30	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Dec. 17	at Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Dec. 24	at Kansas City	1:00	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Dec. 31	Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)



QB RYAN TANNEHILL

2016 RESULTS (10-6)

Sept. 11	at Seattle	L	10-12
Sept. 18	at New England	L	24-31
Sept. 25	Cleveland	W	30-24
Sept. 29	at Cincinnati	L	7-22
Oct. 9	Tennessee	L	17-30
Oct. 16	Pittsburgh	W	30-15
Oct. 23	Buffalo	W	28-25
Nov. 6	N.Y. Jets	W	27-23
Nov. 13	at L.A. Chargers	W	31-24
Nov. 20	at L.A. Rams	W	14-10
Nov. 27	San Francisco	W	31-24
Dec. 4	at Baltimore	L	6-38
Dec. 11	Arizona	W	26-23
Dec. 17	at N.Y. Jets	W	34-13
Dec. 24	at Buffalo (ot)	W	34-31
Jan. 1	New England	L	14-35
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 8	at Pittsburgh	L	12-30

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Ryan Tannehill	389	261	2,995	19	12
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Jay Ajayi	260	1,272	4.9	8	
Kenyan Drake	33	179	5.4	2	
Ryan Tannehill	39	164	4.2	1	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Jarvis Landry	94	1,136	12.1	4	
DeVante Parker	56	744	13.3	4	
Kenny Stills	42	726	17.3	9	
Jay Ajayi	27	151	5.6	0	
Dion Sims	26	256	9.8	4	
Damien Williams	23	249	10.8	3	

KICKING: Andrew Franks, 16-21 FGs, 41-42 PAT, 89 points
TACKLES: Kiko Alonso, 115; Isa Abdul-Quddus, 78
SACKS: Cameron Wake, 11.5; Andre Branch, 5.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Tony Lippett, 4; Three tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	332.8	24	12
Rushing	114.0	9	6
Passing	218.8	26	12
Scoring	22.7	17	9
Third Down %	36.7	25	12
Punt Returns	9.1	13	5
Kick Returns	25.1	T4	T2

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	382.6	29	14
Rushing	140.4	30	15
Passing	242.2	15	8
Scoring	23.8	18	10
Interceptions	16	T9	T5
Sacks	33	T19	T7
Turnover Differential	+2	T13	T8

JAY AJAYI

W. E. Smith III

stem-cell procedure on Mike Pouncey's hip can help keep their oft-injured center on the field. Although one of the league's most talented players at his position, Pouncey has missed 19 games the past four seasons, and his days with the Dolphins are numbered if he can't stay healthy. Larsen (left) and Jermon Bushrod (right) are expected to man the guard spots, but both could have competition from 2017 fifth-round pick Isaac Asiata. The Dolphins picked up the fifth-year option on right tackle Ja'Wuan James, who appears primed for a breakthrough.

DEFENSE Some of Miami's defensive struggles in 2016 — the Dolphins ranked 29th in yards allowed and were gouged for an average of 140.4 rushing yards per game — came from personnel deficiencies in the back seven and growing pains adjusting to a Wide-Nine scheme. The Dolphins are hopeful new coordinator Matt Burke, who was promoted from linebackers coach after Vance Joseph left to become Denver's head coach, can maintain continuity while adding his own wrinkles to the attack. The Dolphins also have given Burke better pieces to work with than Joseph had. Timmons' signing means Alonso can shift from middle to weak-side linebacker, where he could make an even bigger impact. Finally overcoming the injuries that ruined his previous two NFL seasons, Alonso led Dolphins in tackles (115) and spearheaded a seven-game stretch in which Miami forced 19 turnovers. The Dolphins expect Koa Misi to rebound from a neck injury to man the strong-side linebacker spot, although he could face a challenge for that starting role from 2017 second-round pick Raekwon McMillian.

The Wide-Nine did bring out the best in Wake and defensive tackle Ndamukong Suh. Wake recovered from a torn Achilles tendon and dispelled the early season notion among Dolphins coaches that he should be a role player in his mid-30s, notching 10.5 of his 11.5 sacks after returning to the starting lineup in Week 6. On the opposite side, the mistake of overpaying for end Mario Williams was mitigated by the emergence of Branch, who had 5.5 sacks. Charles Harris, the team's 2017 first-round pick, will quickly be worked into the pass-rush rotation. One year after Miami made him the highest-paid defensive tackle in NFL history, Suh finally started to show why thanks to a change in scheme that allowed him to play more aggressively rather than read and react. Suh's 72 tackles ranked third among all interior linemen. The Dolphins now want upgraded play next to him.

Miami's starting cornerbacks are a far cry from the days of Sam Madison and Patrick Surtain, but Byron Maxwell did pick up his game considerably after an early season benching. Maxwell led all NFL cornerbacks with four forced fumbles. Xavien Howard showed promise as a rookie with the steady Tony Lippett playing in nickel situations. Jones was enjoying a brilliant season at strong safety before getting hurt in Week 6 and landing on injured reserve. He will likely play alongside Allen until at least midseason, which is when newcomer McDonald's drug suspension ends.

SPECIALISTS Andrew Franks must improve his 76.2 field goal percentage, but the second-year kicker came through in the clutch last December with game-winners against Arizona and Buffalo. Matt Darr ranks among the NFL's best young punters despite a 3.3-yard dip in net average last season. The coverage units led by safety Michael Thomas are sound, while the return game should continue receiving a lift from Landry and 2016 draft picks Kenyon Drake and Jakeem Grant.

FINAL ANALYSIS During an offseason trip to London, Landry boldly proclaimed Miami would sweep the Patriots in 2017. Doing so for the first time since 2000 might be the only way the Dolphins can end New England's quest for a ninth straight division crown. A second straight wild-card berth is a more realistic expectation.

2017 VETERAN DOLPHINS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
6 Doughty, Brandon	QB	6-3	217	1	Western Kentucky	D7a-16	D7a-Mia-16
9 Fales, David	QB	6-1	212	2	San Jose State	FA-Chi-17	D6a-Chi-14
8 Moore, Matt	QB	6-3	225	9	Oregon State	FA-Car-11	FA-Dal-07
17 Tannehill, Ryan	QB	6-4	216	5	Texas A&M	D1-12	D1-Mia-12
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
23 Ajayi, Jay	RB	6-0	229	2	Boise State	D5b-15	D5b-Mia-15
32 Drake, Kenyan	RB	6-1	216	1	Alabama	D3a-16	D3a-Mia-16
27 Johnson, Storm	RB	6-0	216	2	UCF	FA-16	D7-Jac-14
34 Perry, Senorise	RB	6-0	211	3	Louisville	FA-16	FA-Chi-14
26 Williams, Damien	RB	5-11	228	3	Oklahoma	FA-14	FA-Mia-14
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
88 Carroo, Leonte	WR	6-1	217	1	Rutgers	D3b-16	D3b-Mia-16
83 Duarte, Thomas	TE	6-2	241	1	UCLA	D7b-16	D7b-Mia-16
80 Fasano, Anthony	TE	6-4	255	11	Notre Dame	FA-Ten-17	D2-Dal-06
19 Grant, Jakeem	WR	5-7	172	1	Texas Tech	D6a-16	D6a-Mia-16
48 Gray, MarQueis	TE	6-4	255	4	Minnesota	FA-Buf-16	FA-SF-13
14 Landry, Jarvis	WR	5-11	206	3	LSU	D2-14	D2-Mia-14
86 Pantale, Chris	TE	6-5	254	1	Boston College	FA-17	FA-NYJ-13
11 Parker, DeVante	WR	6-3	212	2	Louisville	D1-15	D1-Mia-15
87 Scott, Rashawn	WR	6-2	204	1	Miami	FA-16	FA-Mia-16
10 Stills, Kenny	WR	6-0	195	4	Oklahoma	T-NO-15	D5-NO-13
89 Thomas, Julius	TE	6-5	260	5	Portland State	T-Jac-17	D4b-Den-11
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
64 Brendel, Jake	C	6-4	305	1	UCLA	FA-16	FA-Dal-16
74 Bushrod, Jermon	G/T	6-5	320	10	Towson	FA-Chi-16	D4-NO-07
77 Davis, Jesse	T	6-6	309	1	Idaho	FA-16	FA-Sea-15
70 James, Ja'Wuan	T	6-6	307	3	Tennessee	D1-14	D1-Mia-14
62 Larsen, Ted	C/G	6-2	315	7	NC State	FA-Chi-17	D6-NE-10
69 Poole, Terry	T	6-5	300	1	San Diego State	FA-16	D4-Sea-15
51 Pouncey, Mike	C	6-5	299	6	Florida	D1-11	D1-Mia-11
65 Steen, Anthony	C/G	6-3	313	1	Alabama	FA-16	FA-Ari-14
67 Tunsil, Laremy	G/T	6-5	316	1	Ole Miss	D1-16	D1-Mia-16
60 Urbik, Kraig	C/G	6-5	334	8	Wisconsin	FA-Buf-16	D3-Pit-09
79 Young, Sam	T	6-8	315	7	Notre Dame	FA-Jac-16	D6-Dal-10
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
50 Branch, Andre	DE	6-5	263	5	Clemson	FA-Jac-16	D2-Jac-12
78 Fede, Terrence	DE	6-4	267	3	Marist	D7-14	D7-Mia-14
95 Hayes, William	DE	6-3	278	9	Winston-Salem St.	T-LAR-17	D4-Ten-08
72 Miley, Arthur	DE	6-6	270	1	Southern	FA-17	FA-Car-15
96 Okoye, Lawrence	DT	6-6	304	1	None	FA-17	FA-SF-13
97 Phillips, Jordan	DT	6-6	335	2	Oklahoma	D2-15	D2-Mia-15
93 Suh, Ndamukong	DT	6-4	305	7	Nebraska	FA-Det-15	D1a-Det-10
91 Wake, Cameron	DE	6-3	263	8	Penn State	FA-09	FA-NYG-05
73 Warmsley, Julius	DE	6-2	294	1	Tulane	FA-16	FA-Hou-14
75 Williams, Nick	DE	6-4	309	3	Samford	W-KC-16	D7-Pit-13
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
47 Alonso, Kiko	LB	6-3	239	4	Oregon	T-Phi-16	D2-Buf-13
49 Barrow, Lamin	LB	6-1	237	3	LSU	FA-16	D5-Den-14
46 Hewitt, Neville	LB	6-2	232	2	Marshall	FA-15	FA-Mia-15
45 Hull, Mike	LB	6-0	233	1	Penn State	FA-15	FA-Mia-15
44 Lacey, Deon	LB	6-1	225	1	West Alabama	FA-17	FA-Dal-13
55 Misi, Koa	LB	6-3	256	7	Utah	D2-10	D2-Mia-10
57 Reilly, Trevor	LB	6-5	245	3	Utah	FA-16	D7-NYJ-14
94 Timmons, Lawrence	LB	6-1	234	10	Florida State	FA-Pit-17	D1-Pit-07
58 Watts, Brandon	LB	6-2	231	3	Georgia Tech	FA-16	D7-Min-14
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
35 Aikens, Walt	S	6-1	218	3	Liberty	D4-14	D4-Mia-14
29 Allen, Nate	S	6-0	210	7	South Florida	FA-Oak-17	D2-Phi-10
37 Hendy, A.J.	S	6-0	209	1	Maryland	FA-16	FA-Mia-16
25 Howard, Xavien	CB	6-1	198	1	Baylor	D2-16	D2-Mia-16
20 Jones, Reshad	S	6-1	214	7	Georgia	D5b-10	D5b-Mia-10
36 Lippett, Tony	CB	6-3	194	2	Michigan State	D5d-15	D5d-Mia-15
21 Lucas, Jordan	CB	6-0	204	1	Penn State	D6b-16	D6b-Mia-16
22 McDonald, T.J.	S	6-2	217	4	USC	FA-LAR-17	D3a-LAR-13
41 Maxwell, Byron	CB	6-1	203	6	Clemson	T-Phi-16	D6-Sea-11
28 McCain, Bobby	CB	5-11	192	2	Memphis	D5a-15	D5a-Mia-15
40 Pitts, Lafayette	CB	5-11	196	1	Pittsburgh	FA-16	FA-Mia-16
31 Thomas, Michael	S	5-11	193	4	Stanford	FA-13	FA-SF-12
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
43 Chapman, Winston	LS	6-2	230	1	Mississippi State	FA-17	FA-Mia-17
4 Darr, Matt	P	6-1	214	2	Tennessee	FA-15	FA-Mia-15
92 Denney, John	LS	6-5	242	12	BYU	FA-05	FA-Mia-05
3 Franks, Andrew	K	6-1	202	2	Rensselaer	FA-15	FA-Mia-15

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	10	Kenny Stills		Isaiah Ford (R)
WR	14	Jarvis Landry	19	Jakeem Grant
WR	11	DeVante Parker	88	Leonte Carroo
LT	67	Laremy Tunsil	79	Sam Young
LG	62	Ted Larsen		Isaac Asiata (R)
C	51	Mike Pouncey	65	Anthony Steen
RG	74	Jermon Bushrod	60	Kraig Urbick
RT	70	Ja'Wuan James	69	Terry Poole
TE	89	Julius Thomas	80	Anthony Fasano
QB	17	Ryan Tannehill	8	Matt Moore
RB	23	Jay Ajayi	26	Damien Williams

DEFENSE

DE	91	Cameron Wake	78	Terrence Fede
DT	93	Ndamukong Suh		Davon Godchaux (R)
DT	97	Jordan Phillips		Vincent Taylor (R)
DE	95	William Hayes	50	Andre Branch
SLB	55	Koa Misi		Raekwon McMillian (R)
MLB	94	Lawrence Timmons	45	Mike Hull
WLB	47	Kiko Alonso	46	Neville Hewitt
CB	41	Byron Maxwell	28	Bobby McCain
CB	25	Xavien Howard	36	Tony Lippett
FS	29	Nate Allen	31	Michael Thomas
SS	20	Reshad Jones	35	Walt Aikens

SPECIALISTS

K	3	Andrew Franks	KR	19	Jakeem Grant
P	4	Matt Darr	PR	14	Jarvis Landry

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
S	Nate Allen	Oakland
TE	Anthony Fasano	Tennessee
DE	William Hayes	L.A. Rams
OG	Ted Larsen	Chicago
S	T.J. McDonald	L.A. Rams
TE	Julius Thomas	Jacksonville
LB	Lawrence Timmons	Pittsburgh

KEY LOSSES −

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
OT	Branden Albert	Jacksonville
LB	Jelani Jenkins	Oakland
DE	Dion Jordan	Seattle
DT	Earl Mitchell	San Francisco

SCOUTING THE DOLPHINS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP MIAMI "Adam Gase proved to be more than ready to handle the head coaching position as he did a masterful job with a mixed bag of players. ... Now that the head coach is in place, the next long-term question surrounds Ryan Tannehill, who played well for much of the year only to suffer a knee injury at the end of the season. No surgery was required, and reports indicate that his rehab should have him ready to go by training camp. ... Their trio of young receivers, DeVante Parker, Kenny Stills and Jarvis Landry, all have different roles and made exciting strides in 2016. ... Laremy Tunsil should make a seamless move to left tackle, and the rest of the offensive line is more than adequate. ... Jay Ajayi had a breakout campaign and is clearly their go-to runner. ... Ndamukong Suh was better than expected in 2016 but is always a wild-card performer. ... Miami was thrilled to add Missouri defensive end Charles Harris to its pass rush as a first-round pick. ... The linebackers are a work in progress with Kiko Alonso getting an extension and Lawrence Timmons coming in as a free agent from the Steelers. ... Raekwon McMillan (Ohio State) was their second-round pick, but some question his ability as a point-of-attack defender. ... The secondary is the weakest part of their roster and may prove to be their undoing against the Patriots. ... Byron Maxwell, Xavien Howard and rookie Cordrea Tankersley are all bigger corners with a lack of short-area quickness and coverage skills. ... Cann this team make the playoffs? Maybe. Major run in playoffs? Doubtful."

Harris: Tim Umphrey; Suh: W. E. Smith III

DOLPHINS IN THE *DRAFT* C+

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Charles Harris	OLB	6-3	253	Missouri
2.	Raekwon McMillian	OLB	6-4	240	Ohio State
3.	Cordrea Tankersley	CB	6-1	199	Clemson
5.	Isaac Asiata	G	6-3	323	Utah
5.	Davon Godchaux	DT	6-3	310	LSU
6.	Vincent Taylor	DT	6-3	304	Oklahoma State
7.	Isaiah Ford	WR	6-1	194	Virginia Tech

Miami eschewed small-school prospects by using all seven picks on players from the Power 5 conferences. Charles Harris must prove he can overcome sub-par workout times in the 40-yard dash for NFL pass-rushing success. Raekwon McMillian also may have gotten over-drafted if he can't prove himself as more than a part-time player at strong-side linebacker. Cordrea Tankersley played a key role on a Clemson team that played in the national title game each of the last two years. Isaac Asiata could have the best chance of any pick to start as a rookie with the Dolphins set to field two journeymen (Ted Larsen and Jermon Bushrod) at their guard spots. Defensive tackle Jordan Phillips should be looking over his shoulder at Davon Godchaux and Vincent Taylor pushing for his reps. In only three seasons in college, Isaiah Ford set Virginia Tech career records in receptions (210), receiving yards (2,967) and receiving touchdowns (24). He will be the team's No. 4 wide receiver.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

ANOTHER TYPE OF COMBINE To help his players prepare for life after football, team owner Stephen Ross sponsored the inaugural Dolphins Business Combine. Ross hosted 16 players in New York City to hear from company leaders and get a peek at what awaits in the "real world." Those who participated were serious about their interest as all paid for their own transportation and lodging to the event.

ALL IN THE FAMILY Joe Vitt's firing as linebackers/assistant head coach in New Orleans gave Dolphins head coach Adam Gase the chance to hire his father-in-law. Rather than head to the sideline, Vitt will serve as a Dolphins consultant working on special projects. The move might be knocked for nepotism, but there's no denying that Vitt has something to offer Gase and the Dolphins with his 38 years of NFL experience in various coaching capacities.

NO DOUBTS ABOUT THOMAS Say what you will about safety Michael Thomas' decision last season to kneel during the national anthem, but one thing that shouldn't be questioned is Thomas' commitment to making the world a better place. The special-teams standout continued his advocacy this offseason with another trip to Haiti to help fund solutions to a water crisis in the country's remote regions. Thomas also regularly travels to Fort Pierce, Fla., to get involved in community projects such as fostering better relations between the police and citizens.

TOUGH GUY So much for the perception that Charles Harris was soft. That criticism he heard in high school as a junior basketball player prompted Harris to begin playing football. Harris was selected in the first round after proving himself to be a top-level edge rusher at Missouri.

BUILT TO LAST Long snapper John Denney arrived to the Dolphins as an undrafted free agent in 2005 and has never left. Denney, 38, enters the season with a franchise-record 192 consecutive starts.

DOLPHINS OVERSEAS For the third time in four years, the Dolphins will head to London for a regular-season game, in Week 4 against New Orleans. Miami's willingness to travel abroad helped in the bid to bring Super Bowl LIV to South Florida.

ROCKING AT HARD ROCK The Dolphins have finally completed a $500 million-plus renovation of Hard Rock Stadium. Last year, the franchise was forced to play a preseason matchup against Atlanta in Orlando while finishing touches were completed.

FINS UP TO J.T. Jason Taylor became the fifth player in franchise history to get selected for the Pro Football Hall of Fame in his first year of eligibility. Taylor's candidacy received an unexpected boost from Tom Brady, who wrote a letter of support on his behalf to Hall voters. The Dolphins will present Taylor with his Hall of Fame ring at a regular-season game.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

4.7 The Dolphins ranked 31st in the NFL in defensive Adjusted Sack Rate, sacking opposing quarterbacks on just 4.7 percent of their pass snaps.

29.8 Miami ran the slowest offense in the league, averaging 29.8 seconds per play.

5.0 The Dolphins had the lowest average plays per offensive drive, with just 5.0 per possession.

NDAMUKONG SUH

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

AFC EAST FORECAST

1

For a Patriots team that had just completed the greatest comeback in Super Bowl history, complacency did not set in. Not even a little bit.

If anything, the Pats and coach Bill Belichick ratcheted up the offseason intensity with a flurry of moves — both in trades and free agency — that only heightened their status as the favorites to win their third Super Bowl in four years. As evidenced by a draft that saw the Pats select only four players, most of whom will likely only be depth pieces at first, the Pats are built to win now and win big.

The question then becomes: What exactly can derail this runaway train? Are conference foes such as the Raiders, Texans, Steelers or Chiefs ready to take the next step? Can the Broncos recover from a disappointing 2016?

One thing is for certain: The Patriots set the pace. A significant push will be necessary to knock them off their perch and keep them from making it to Minnesota for Super Bowl LII.

OFFENSE The stirring MVP performance that Tom Brady gave in the Super Bowl win over the Falcons tells you everything you need to know about his lasting ability to play the position even as he begins the 2017 season at 40 years old. He won't go on forever, but that's why the team retained backup quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo despite reportedly receiving repeated overtures from the Browns to trade him away. In so doing, the Patriots will be starting an all-time great at the most important position on the field while having an insurance policy who they believe can carry them to the promised land if Brady gets hurt.

On top of that, the Pats significantly upgraded Brady's wide receiving corps when they dealt the No. 32 pick in the draft for ex-Saint Brandin Cooks. With the speedy Cooks in the fold, the Pats add the valuable element of a deep threat to an already potent unit. Cooks can also line up in the slot and be effective in traffic, something he will do more in New England than he did in New Orleans.

Look for last year's breakout rookie receiver Malcolm Mitchell to have an increased role. When factoring in the rest of the group — Chris Hogan, Julian Edelman and Danny Amendola — you aren't going to see many double-teams, and safety help over the top will be difficult to spread around. This will create the type of matchups Brady can feast on.

There is some uncertainty around the tight end position. Rob Gronkowski will be coming off back surgery, and the increasingly injury-prone star is becoming less and less reliable in terms of his availability. The Pats acquired Dwayne Allen to fill the void left by Martellus Bennett, who left for the Packers in free agency, but Allen has his own injury history.

The questions surrounding the running back position are of a different nature. The team swiped restricted free agent Mike Gillislee from the Buffalo Bills, and he could be the lead back in a deep rotation. But Rex Burkhead and Dion Lewis also can be effective in multiple facets, and third-down back James White seems like he will hold down that spot after receiving a contract extension in April. Rather than settle on a consistent rotation, the Patriots could use the backs based on game-plan need and leave opponents guessing as to which one they'll have to worry about from week to week. That kind of personnel flexibility is something Belichick likes.

The line is relatively stable. Tackles Nate Solder and Marcus Cannon both performed at a high level last season. Although the interior line is still young, center David Andrews and right guard Shaq Mason have shown steady improvement. Left guard Joe Thuney should do the same.

Overall, this is an offense that — barring injury — should eclipse last year's production.

DEFENSE As opposed to last year, the Patriots will be facing a much tougher group of quarterbacks on the schedule now that the

THE ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN/CEO: Robert Kraft
PRESIDENT: Jonathan Kraft
DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Nick Caserio
GENERAL MANAGER: Bill Belichick
STADIUM: Gillette Stadium (66,829)
SURFACE: FieldTurf Revolution
WEBSITE: www.patriots.com
TICKETS: 800-543-1776
TRAINING CAMP: Gillette Stadium (Foxboro, Mass.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Bill Belichick
RECORD WITH TEAM: 201–71
CAREER RECORD: 237–115
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR/QUARTERBACKS: Josh McDaniels
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Matt Patricia
RUNNING BACKS: Ivan Fears
WIDE RECEIVERS: Chad O'Shea
TIGHT ENDS: Nick Caley
OFFENSIVE LINE: Dante Scarnecchia
DEFENSIVE LINE: Brendan Daly
LINEBACKERS: Brian Flores
CORNERBACKS: Josh Boyer
SAFETIES: Steve Belichick
SPECIAL TEAMS: Joe Judge

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2012	12
2013	12
2014	12
2015	12
2016	14

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 7	Kansas City (Thu.)	8:30	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Sept. 17	at New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Sept. 24	Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Oct. 1	Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Oct. 5	at Tampa Bay (Thu.)	8:25	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Oct. 15	at N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Oct. 22	Atlanta	8:30	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Oct. 29	L.A. Chargers	1:00	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
BYE							
Nov. 12	at Denver	8:30	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Nov. 19	vs. Oakland (Mexico City)	4:25	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Nov. 26	Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Dec. 3	at Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Dec. 11	at Miami (Mon.)	8:30	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Dec. 17	at Pittsburgh	4:25	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Dec. 24	Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Dec. 31	N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

QB TOM BRADY

2016 RESULTS (14-2)

Sept. 11	at Arizona	W	23-21
Sept. 18	Miami	W	31-24
Sept. 22	Houston	W	27-0
Oct. 2	Buffalo	L	0-16
Oct. 9	at Cleveland	W	33-13
Oct. 16	Cincinnati	W	35-17
Oct. 23	at Pittsburgh	W	27-16
Oct. 30	at Buffalo	W	41-25
Nov. 13	Seattle	L	24-31
Nov. 20	at San Francisco	W	30-17
Nov. 27	at N.Y. Jets	W	22-17
Dec. 4	L.A. Rams	W	26-10
Dec. 12	Baltimore	W	30-23
Dec. 18	at Denver	W	16-3
Dec. 24	N.Y. Jets	W	41-3
Jan. 1	at Miami	W	35-14
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 14	Houston	W	34-16
Jan. 22	Pittsburgh	W	36-17
Feb. 5	Atlanta (ot)	W	34-28

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Tom Brady	432	291	3,554	28	2
Jimmy Garoppolo	63	43	502	4	0
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
LeGarrette Blount	299	1,161	3.9	18	
Dion Lewis	64	283	4.4	0	
James White	39	166	4.3	0	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Julian Edelman	98	1,106	11.3	6	
James White	60	551	9.2	5	
Martellus Bennett	55	701	12.7	7	
Chris Hogan	38	680	17.9	4	
Malcolm Mitchell	32	401	12.5	4	

KICKING: Stephen Gostkowski, 27-32 FGs, 46-49 PAT, 127 points
TACKLES: Logan Ryan, 92; Patrick Chung, 91
SACKS: Trey Flowers, 7.0; Jabaal Sheard, 5.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Malcolm Butler, 4; Two tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	386.2	4	1
Rushing	117.0	7	3
Passing	269.2	4	1
Scoring	27.6	3	1
Third Down %	45.8	4	2
Punt Returns	6.9	25	11
Kick Returns	18.7	27	13

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	326.4	8	5
Rushing	88.6	4	2
Passing	237.9	12	7
Scoring	15.6	1	1
Interceptions	13	T15	T8
Sacks	34	T16	6
Turnover Differential	+12	3	3

ROB GRONKOWSKI

AFC West and NFC South rotate onto the slate. The team responded by doubling down on top players in the secondary and at edge rusher. Time will tell if the response is effective, but at this stage it appears Belichick made the right moves again.

Although Malcolm Butler was the team's No. 1 corner for the past two seasons, the Pats appears to have co-No. 1s after they grabbed Stephon Gilmore and paid him $13 million per year. Butler is likely to leave in free agency after the 2017 season, but for at least the time being, the Pats have an ideal pairing. With Eric Rowe as a taller option who is more suited to play on the outside, look for Butler to get snaps against slot receivers and become an occasional blitzer off the edge as well.

The safety unit is stable with Patrick Chung, Devin McCourty and Duron Harmon all entrenched as a communicative and talented group. Overall, if teams beat the Pats through the air, they will have earned it.

The front seven has a few more question marks, starting with the linebackers. The Pats re-signed Dont'a Hightower, but he has dealt with injury woes that could worsen down the line. There really isn't a great coverage linebacker on the team, which often leaves the Patriots vulnerable to intermediate passing routes.

Still, the Pats will be stout against the run. The defensive line replenished its stock and has both depth and versatility. Trey Flowers is an emerging star at defensive end, and the addition of Kony Ealy via trade with the Panthers injects another youthful pass rusher into the mix. The team also drafted two defensive ends, which means the Pats are looking for more competition at that spot heading into training camp.

Defensive tackle Alan Branch had his best season as a Patriot in 2016 and will again be counted on to hold up at the point of attack. Entering his third year, fellow tackle Malcom Brown has been steady if unspectacular. The Pats hope he can become even more disruptive as his career unfolds. The team added former Raven Lawrence Guy into the mix, and his ability to play both tackle and end adds value.

The defense topped the league last season in points allowed, but against a weaker schedule. Look for it to be better this year, but the improved opponents may hurt the numbers by comparison. Either way, the Pats have a strong base from which to work.

SPECIALISTS By his standards, placekicker Stephen Gostkowski had a down year in 2016, including a missed extra point in the Super Bowl. His performance is worth monitoring. Ideally, second-year cornerback Cyrus Jones would grab hold of the spots on the return units, but his persistent fumbling problems have prevented him from doing that. Belichick will likely give him another shot at it, but the coach's patience has worn thin. Jones was a healthy scratch by the end of the season.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Patriots are among the Super Bowl favorites nearly every year, but this season it appears they are more likely than usual to add another Lombardi Trophy to the collection. There is veteran leadership, young talent and the elite coaching that most teams aspire to.

That said, the roadblocks along the way can't be easily dismissed. As mentioned, the schedule is tougher, and the Dolphins appear to be on the precipice of becoming a worthy divisional foil. The Texans are a quarterback away from being a legitimate contender, and if they found him in Deshaun Watson, look out. The Raiders still have one of the best young rosters in the league, as do the Chiefs, and the Broncos, like the Texans, are a quarterback away from getting right back to where they want to be. Of course, if the Steelers can stay healthy, they are also a true threat.

But those teams all have major "ifs" to combat. As of now, we know exactly what the Patriots are: The favorites to win Super Bowl LII — no ifs, ands or buts about it.

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN PATRIOTS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
12 Brady, Tom	QB	6-4	225	17	Michigan	D6b-00	D6b-NE-00
7 Brissett, Jacoby	QB	6-4	235	1	NC State	D3b-16	D3b-NE-16
10 Garoppolo, Jimmy	QB	6-2	225	3	Eastern Illinois	D2-14	D2-NE-14
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
38 Bolden, Brandon	RB	5-11	220	5	Mississippi	FA-12	FA-NE-12
Burkhead, Rex	RB	5-10	210	4	Nebraska	FA-Cin-17	D6a-Cin-13
46 Develin, James	FB	6-3	255	4	Brown	FA-12	FA-Cin-10
27 Foster, D.J.	RB	6-0	195	1	Arizona State	FA-16	FA-NE-16
Gillislee, Mike	RB	5-11	219	3	Florida	FA-Buf-17	D5-Mia-13
47 Gronkowski, Glenn	FB	6-3	235	1	Kansas State	FA-16	FA-Buf-16
33 Lewis, Dion	RB	5-8	195	5	Pittsburgh	FA-15	D5-Phi-11
28 White, James	RB	5-10	205	3	Wisconsin	D4b-14	D4b-NE-14
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
Allen, Dwayne	TE	6-3	265	5	Clemson	T-Ind-17	D3-Ind-12
80 Amendola, Danny	WR	5-11	190	8	Texas Tech	FA-LAR-13	FA-Dal-08
Cooks, Brandin	WR	5-10	189	3	Oregon State	T-NO-17	D1-NO-14
11 Edelman, Julian	WR	5-10	200	8	Kent State	D7a-09	D7a-NE-09
87 Gronkowski, Rob	TE	6-6	265	7	Arizona	D2a-10	D2a-NE-10
15 Hogan, Chris	WR	6-1	210	4	Monmouth	FA-Buf-16	FA-SF-11
Housler, Rob	TE	6-5	250	5	Florida Atlantic	FA-17	D3-Ari-11
82 Lengel, Matt	TE	6-7	266	1	Eastern Kentucky	FA-16	FA-Cin-15
16 Lucien, Devin	WR	6-2	200	1	Arizona State	D7-16	D7-NE-16
19 Mitchell, Malcolm	WR	6-1	200	1	Georgia	D4-16	D4-NE-16
O'Shaughnessy, James	TE	6-4	245	2	Illinois State	T-KC-17	D5-KC-15
18 Slater, Matthew	WR	6-0	205	9	UCLA	D5-08	D5-NE-08
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
60 Andrews, David	C	6-3	295	2	Georgia	FA-15	FA-NE-15
64 Barker, Chris	OL	6-2	275	2	Nevada	FA-16	FA-Mia-13
61 Cannon, Marcus	OL	6-5	335	6	Texas Christian	D5a-11	D5a-NE-11
65 Douglas, Jamil	OL	6-4	308	2	Arizona State	FA-16	D4-Mia-15
66 Farris, Chase	OL	6-4	295	1	Ohio State	FA-16	FA-Det-16
71 Fleming, Cameron	OL	6-6	320	3	Stanford	D4c-14	D4c-NE-14
75 Karras, Ted	OL	6-4	305	1	Illinois	D6c-16	D6c-NE-16
69 Mason, Shaq	OL	6-1	310	2	Georgia Tech	D4c-15	D4c-NE-15
77 Solder, Nate	T	6-8	325	6	Colorado	D1-11	D1-NE-11
62 Thuney, Joe	OL	6-5	305	1	NC State	D3a-16	D3a-NE-16
68 Waddle, LaAdrian	OL	6-6	315	4	Texas Tech	W-Det-15	FA-Det-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
97 Branch, Alan	DL	6-6	350	10	Michigan	FA-14	D2-Ari-07
90 Brown, Malcom	DL	6-2	320	2	Texas	D1-15	D1-NE-15
Ealy, Kony	DE	6-4	275	3	Missouri	T-Car-17	D2-Car-14
98 Flowers, Trey	DL	6-2	265	2	Arkansas	D4a-15	D4a-NE-15
92 Grissom, Geneo	DL	6-4	265	2	Oklahoma	D3-15	D3-NE-15
Guy, Lawrence	DL	6-4	305	5	Arizona State	FA-Bal-17	D7-GB-11
74 Hamilton, Woodrow	DL	6-3	315	1	Ole Miss	FA-16	FA-NE-16
96 Kilgo, Darius	DL	6-3	319	2	Maryland	W-Den-16	D6-Den-15
99 Valentine, Vincent	DT	6-3	320	1	Nebraska	D3c-16	D3c-NE-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
44 Bates, Trevor	LB	6-2	247	1	Maine	FA-16	D7-Ind-16
55 Freeny, Jonathan	LB	6-2	255	5	Rutgers	FA-15	FA-Mia-11
54 Hightower, Dont'a	LB	6-3	265	5	Alabama	D1b-12	D1b-NE-12
58 McClellin, Shea	LB	6-3	250	5	Boise State	FA-Chi-16	D1-Chi-12
50 Ninkovich, Rob	LB	6-2	260	11	Purdue	FA-09	D5-NO-06
52 Roberts, Elandon	LB	6-0	235	1	Houston	D6b-16	D6b-NE-16
53 Van Noy, Kyle	LB	6-3	243	3	BYU	T-Det-16	D2-Det-14
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
21 Butler, Malcolm	CB	5-11	190	3	West Alabama	FA-14	FA-NE-14
23 Chung, Patrick	S	5-11	215	8	Oregon	FA-Phi-14	D2a-NE-09
22 Coleman, Justin	DB	5-11	190	2	Tennessee	PS-Sea-15	FA-Min-15
43 Ebner, Nate	DB	6-0	220	5	Ohio State	D6-12	D6-NE-12
Gilmore, Stephon	CB	6-1	190	5	South Carolina	FA-Buf-17	D1-Buf-12
30 Harmon, Duron	DB	6-1	205	4	Rutgers	D3b-13	D3b-NE-13
24 Jones, Cyrus	CB	5-10	200	1	Alabama	D2-16	D2-NE-16
31 Jones, Jonathan	DB	5-10	190	1	Auburn	FA-16	FA-NE-16
36 King, Brandon	DB	6-2	220	2	Auburn	FA-15	FA-NE-15
32 McCourty, Devin	DB	5-10	195	7	Rutgers	D1-10	D1-NE-10
37 Richards, Jordan	DB	5-11	210	2	Stanford	D2-15	D2-NE-15
25 Rowe, Eric	DB	6-1	205	2	Utah	T-Phi-16	D2-Phi-15
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
6 Allen, Ryan	P	6-2	220	4	Louisiana Tech	FA-13	FA-NE-13
49 Cardona, Joe	LS	6-3	245	2	Navy	D5-15	D5-NE-15
3 Gostkowski, Stephen	K	6-1	215	11	Memphis	D4b-06	D4b-NE-06

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	11	Julian Edelman	80	Danny Amendola
WR	15	Chris Hogan	19	Malcolm Mitchell
WR		Brandin Cooks	18	Matthew Slater
LT	77	Nate Solder	61	Marcus Cannon
LG	62	Joe Thuney	65	Jamil Douglas
C	60	David Andrews	75	Ted Karras
RG	69	Shaq Mason	75	Ted Karras
RT	61	Marcus Cannon		Antonio Garcia (R)
TE	87	Rob Gronkowski		Dwayne Allen
QB	12	Tom Brady	10	Jimmy Garoppolo
RB		Mike Gillislee	28	James White

DEFENSE

DE	98	Trey Flowers	92	Geneo Grissom
DT	90	Malcom Brown	99	Vincent Valentine
DT	97	Alan Branch		Lawrence Guy
DE		Kony Ealy		Derek Rivers (R)
SLB	58	Shea McClellin	55	Jonathan Freeny
MLB	54	Dont'a Hightower	53	Kyle Van Noy
WLB	50	Rob Ninkovich	52	Elandon Roberts
CB		Stephon Gilmore	24	Cyrus Jones
CB	21	Malcolm Butler	25	Eric Rowe
FS	32	Devin McCourty	30	Duron Harmon
SS	23	Patrick Chung	37	Jordan Richards

SPECIALISTS

K	3	Stephen Gostkowski	KR	24	Cyrus Jones
P	6	Ryan Allen	PR	24	Cyrus Jones

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
TE	Dwayne Allen	Indianapolis
WR	Brandin Cooks	New Orleans
DE	Kony Ealy	Carolina
RB	Mike Gillislee	Buffalo
CB	Stephon Gilmore	Buffalo
DL	Lawrence Guy	Baltimore

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
TE	Martellus Bennett	Green Bay
DE	Chris Long	Philadelphia
LB	Barkevious Mingo	Indianapolis
CB	Logan Ryan	Tennessee
DE	Jabaal Sheard	Indianapolis

SCOUTING THE PATRIOTS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP NEW ENGLAND "While Bill Belichick and Tom Brady get 99 percent of the credit for the Patriots' success, you cannot overlook offensive line coach Dante Scarnecchia, who unretired last year and helped solidify a group that is underwhelming when evaluated individually. It's amazing what Scarnecchia did with just an average set of guys up front. ... If Brady gets protection, they win, period. ... The wide receivers are interchangeable and each has his own flaws, but with Brady, they all play well above their means. Brandin Cooks should be sensational in this offense. ... The Pats moved on from LeGarrette Blount and signed Mike Gillislee away from Buffalo as a restricted free agent. ... Gillislee will be the physical hammer, while Rex Burkhead, formerly of the Bengals, is an exceptionally versatile player. ... Defensively, Dont'a Hightower tested the market but returned, while New England threw huge dollars at Bills' cornerback Stephon Gilmore. Belichick sees him as a matchup hybrid to defend taller receivers and tight ends. ... While they flirted with trading Malcolm Butler and even allowed him to negotiate with the Saints, it appears he will be back. ... Defensive end Trey Flowers was a revelation in 2016 with seven sacks, and they expect Kony Ealy (Panthers) to increase his pressure production after they traded for him in March. ... New England did most of its personnel work in free agency and opted to keep Jimmy Garoppolo in the fold rather than trading him. The reality here is that while Brady will be 40 years old in August, the Pats continue to be the team to beat in the entire NFL, because the sum of their parts is always greater than the whole, that's the Belichick way."

PATRIOTS IN THE *DRAFT* B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
3.	**Derek Rivers**	**DE**	**6-5**	**248**	**Youngstown State**
3.	Antonio Garcia	OT	6-6	302	Troy
4.	Deatrich Wise	DE	6-5	275	Arkansas
6.	Conor McDermott	OT	6-8	307	UCLA

The Pats doubled up on two positions. Derek Rivers and Antonio Garcia slipped into the third round but could have gone much higher. Rivers could be in the rotation this season, and Garcia provides valuable developmental depth behind Nate Solder and Marcus Cannon. Deatrich Wise and Conor McDermott most likely won't see much time this season but could become contributors down the line. The Patriots did not have picks in the first two rounds; their first-round pick went to New Orleans in the Brandin Cooks deal, and their second-round pick went to Carolina as part of the trade that brought Kony Ealey to New England.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

PRESIDENTIAL CONNECTION With owner Robert Kraft, team president Jonathan Kraft, coach Bill Belichick and quarterback Tom Brady all outspoken friends of President Donald Trump, there has been some backlash among fans about the connection between the franchise and the administration. A total of 34 players made the ceremonial trip to the White House to celebrate the Super Bowl LI win over the Falcons, while almost 50 had made the visit in 2015 following Super Bowl XLIX.

GRONK-LEMANIA Wrestlemania is always a spectacle for outlandish moments, so maybe Rob Gronkowski is a perfect player for the action. In the 33rd edition this April, Gronkowski, a friend of wrestler Mojo Rawley, interfered in the Andre the Giant Memorial Battle Royal after Jinder Mahal threw a drink at him outside the ring. For a player coming off season-ending back surgery, perhaps it was not the wisest move by Gronkowski, but the fans of Wrestlemania sure enjoyed it.

LONG-AWAITED ARRIVAL Ever since the prolonged battle between commissioner Roger Goodell and the Patriots over Deflategate, New England fans have thirsted to see him come to Foxboro so they could give him a piece of their mind and express their outrage over the whole ordeal. Chants of "Where is Roger?" pulsated in many a stadium around the region, including Fenway Park during Red Sox games. The vitriol toward him is real, and Goodell promised to be at the Thursday night opener against the Chiefs.

WELL COORDINATED With offensive coordinator Josh McDaniels and defensive coordinator Matt Patricia, the Pats have two assistants who have interviewed for multiple head coaching jobs in recent years. McDaniels is waiting for the right situation and should be picky, because his first stint in Denver did not work out, and a second failure would make things much tougher for him down the line. Patricia sculpted the number one scoring defense last year and is quickly becoming another hot name in the carousel.

SOUTH OF THE BORDER One of the biggest games on the schedule for a variety of reasons is the Nov. 19 showdown with the Oakland Raiders. Yes, it will be a juicy matchup because the soon-to-be Las Vegas outfit is one of the top emerging teams in the league. However, most of the hype will center around the location, Estadio Azteca in Mexico City. Known for its high altitude and electric atmosphere for soccer matches, the venue will be truly unique for such a high-profile football game.

BACKUP PLAN Rumors swirled around the draft that the Patriots would send backup quarterback Jimmy Garoppolo to the Browns for a king's ransom of draft picks. That never came to fruition, as the Patriots are simply too loaded for bear to relinquish Garoppolo with a 40-year-old Brady set to take the field this season. However, Garoppolo is a free agent after the 2017 season. There will be willing suitors again. The Pats can franchise tag him at $25 million to buy some time, but that's a hefty price for a second-stringer. Some big decisions are looming for Belichick and Co.

END TO A SAD SAGA Former Patriots tight end Aaron Hernandez committed suicide just days after being acquitted of the double murder of Daniel de Abreu and Safiro Furtado, bringing an end to one of the most tragic tales in the sport's history. Already sentenced to life in prison for the homicide of Odin Lloyd, Hernandez seemed happy in court and wept as the not guilty verdict was read, but he could not escape his demons.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

.046 The Patriots averaged a league-low .046 turnovers per offensive drive.

24.76 The Patriots had the best average starting field position on defense (24.76-yard line) and the second-best average starting field position on offense (30.66-yard line).

7.41 At 7.41, New England had the largest average lead while on offense in the NFL.

JULIAN EDELMAN

Rivers: AP; Edelman: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

NEW YORK JETS

AFC EAST FORECAST

4

A year ago, the Jets entered the 2016 season with lofty expectations and high hopes, after they had won 10 games in coach Todd Bowles' first season. They dreamed of making the playoffs for the first time since 2010.

Things have changed drastically at the team's headquarters in Florham Park, N.J., since then. The 2017 Jets are in get-younger, full-on rebuilding mode, with a roster majorly lacking in talent. They have almost zero shot of making the playoffs this season.

Coming off a 5–11 disaster of a season in 2016, the Jets stripped their roster of veterans. They are starting over now. No more quick rebuild, like they attempted in 2015 and '16. This process is going to take a while.

And owner Woody Johnson gets that. He hasn't put a playoff mandate on Bowles and general manager Mike Maccagnan in 2017. Johnson just wants to see steady improvement from the young Jets, with less focus on black-and-white wins and losses.

Will this approach — building through the draft, instead of patching up their roster via free agency — work for the Jets in the long run? Maybe. Maybe not. But one thing is for sure: This season likely will be a long one for this organization.

OFFENSE So what is there to play for? Well, the main focus for the Jets in 2017 will be on the quarterback position. The Jets didn't draft a QB, so they're rolling with journeyman Josh McCown and youngsters Christian Hackenberg and Bryce Petty. This is a prove-it year for Hackenberg, whom the Jets drafted (to many raised eyebrows) in Round 2 last year.

This season is all about whether Hackenberg has what it takes to play in the NFL — or doesn't. He looked raw in the preseason last year, and then didn't play in the regular season. Which was fine. But this year, he needs to take a big step forward. McCown won't be with the Jets past 2017, and Petty looks like a backup, ultimately. Will Hackenberg give the Jets a reason to look back fondly on 2017, even if they struggle to win games?

The Jets are also trying to incorporate younger wide receivers, now that Brandon Marshall is playing for the Giants. Can Quincy Enunwa prove himself as a potential No. 1 threat, rather than just a hybrid receiver/tight end? What do the Jets have in Robby Anderson, who flashed last year as an undrafted rookie? Eric Decker, 30, is still around, but he isn't part of the Jets' long-term plans.

While the Jets drafted two receivers (ArDarius Stewart and Chad Hansen), they also selected tight end Jordan Leggett to bolster a position that was nonexistent under offensive coordinator Chan Gailey. Gailey retired, and the Jets replaced him with John Morton.

The running game was respectable — the Jets ranked 12th in the league — but Matt Forté averaged only 3.7 yards per carry, his lowest number since 2009.

Offensive line is another position group where the Jets are rolling with younger players. They're giving second-year pro Brandon Shell a chance to win the right tackle job. He has a good shot at beating out Ben Ijalana, though Ijalana is more proven. The Jets cut Nick Mangold and gave the center job to Wesley Johnson, a fourth-year pro. Big shoes to fill there for Johnson.

DEFENSE While Mangold and Marshall were cut on offense, the Jets also released once-elite cornerback Darrelle Revis, who was a mess last season — as was the Jets' secondary as a whole.

The Jets didn't make a big-splash cornerback pickup in free agency or the draft. They signed the oft-injured Morris Claiborne and drafted two corners in Round 6. But they overhauled their safety positions, as Calvin Pryor and Marcus Gilchrist — both ineffective — will be replaced by Jamal Adams (Round 1 pick) and Marcus Maye (Round 2 pick).

For now, the Jets will do what they can at corner with Claiborne, Buster Skrine (who is better suited in the slot) and Marcus Wil-

THE ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN/CEO: Woody Johnson
PRESIDENT: Neil Glat
GENERAL MANAGER: Mike Maccagnan
DIR. OF FOOTBALL ADMIN: Jacqueline Davidson
STADIUM: MetLife Stadium (82,500)
SURFACE: UBU Sports Speed Series S5-M
WEBSITE: www.newyorkjets.com
TICKETS: 800-469-5387
TRAINING CAMP: Jets Training Center (Florham Park, N.J.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Todd Bowles
RECORD WITH TEAM: 15–17
CAREER RECORD: 17–18
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: John Morton
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Kacy Rodgers
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Brant Boyer
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/INSIDE LINEBACKERS: Mike Caldwell
QUARTERBACKS: Jeremy Bates
RUNNING BACKS: Stump Mitchell
WIDE RECEIVERS: Karl Dorrell
TIGHT ENDS: Jimmie Johnson
OFFENSIVE LINE: Steve Marshall
DEFENSIVE LINE: Robert Nunn
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS: Kevin Greene
CORNERBACKS: Daylon McCutcheon
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Dennard Wilson

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	at Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Sept. 17	at Oakland	4:05	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Sept. 24	Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Oct. 1	Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Oct. 8	at Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Oct. 15	New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Oct. 22	at Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Oct. 29	Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Nov. 2	Buffalo (Thu.)	8:25	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Nov. 12	at Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
BYE							
Nov. 26	Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Dec. 3	Kansas City	1:00	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Dec. 10	at Denver	4:05	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Dec. 17	at New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Dec. 24	L.A. Chargers	1:00	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Dec. 31	at New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)

RB MATT FORTE

2016 RESULTS (5-11)

Sept. 11	Cincinnati	L	22-23
Sept. 15	at Buffalo	W	37-31
Sept. 25	at Kansas City	L	3-24
Oct. 2	Seattle	L	17-27
Oct. 9	at Pittsburgh	L	13-31
Oct. 17	at Arizona	L	3-28
Oct. 23	Baltimore	W	24-16
Oct. 30	at Cleveland	W	31-28
Nov. 6	at Miami	L	23-27
Nov. 13	L.A. Rams	L	6-9
Nov. 27	New England	L	17-22
Dec. 5	Indianapolis	L	10-41
Dec. 11	at San Francisco (ot)	W	23-17
Dec. 17	Miami	L	13-34
Dec. 24	at New England	L	3-41
Jan. 1	Buffalo	W	30-10

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Ryan Fitzpatrick	403	228	2,710	12	17
Bryce Petty	133	75	809	3	7
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Matt Forté	218	813	3.7	7	
Bilal Powell	131	722	5.5	3	
Ryan Fitzpatrick	33	130	3.9	0	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Brandon Marshall	59	788	13.4	3	
Bilal Powell	58	388	6.7	2	
Quincy Enunwa	58	857	14.8	4	
Robby Anderson	42	587	14.0	2	
Matt Forté	30	263	8.8	1	

KICKING: Nick Folk, 27-31 FGs, 24-26 PAT, 105 points
TACKLES: David Harris, 95; Darron Lee, 73
SACKS: Leonard Williams, 7.0; Muhammad Wilkerson, 4.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Marcus Williams, 2; Marcus Gilchrist, 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	329.2	26	13
Rushing	112.6	12	7
Passing	216.6	27	13
Scoring	17.2	30	15
Third Down %	36.2	27	14
Punt Returns	5.5	T31	T15
Kick Returns	21.9	15	8

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	342.4	11	6
Rushing	98.8	11	5
Passing	243.6	17	10
Scoring	25.6	28	14
Interceptions	8	T29	T14
Sacks	27	29	14
Turnover Differential	-20	T31	16

LEONARD WILLIAMS

liams. An intriguing player to watch is Juston Burris, a fourth-round pick last year. The Jets coaches like his potential as a press man-to-man coverage corner. Can he carve out a role for himself in this rebuilding secondary?

Up front on defense, this is a huge year for defensive end Muhammad Wilkerson, who got a big contract from the Jets last offseason and then didn't deliver — perhaps partly due to his recovery from a broken leg sustained late in the 2015 season. Wilkerson had just 4.5 sacks last season after racking up 12 in 2015. The Jets could cut him after 2017 if he struggles again. The move would free up $11 million in salary cap space for 2018, with $9 million in dead money attached. Wilkerson is due to have a $20 million cap figure next season. In 2017, will he prove to be worth that?

At linebacker, this could be the year that the Jets transition Darron Lee (last year's first-round pick) to be middle linebacker David Harris' replacement. Harris, who has been the Jets' middle linebacker since 2007, is entering the final year of his contract. Is Lee capable of playing middle linebacker? That's another storyline the Jets hope to sort out this year. Harris can't cover running backs in the open field like he used to. Lee is more athletic — and plenty capable in mid-range coverage — but is he bulky enough to hold up as a middle linebacker, while sticking his nose in and defending the run?

SPECIALISTS It seemed unlikely going into last season, but the Jets were actually worse on special teams in 2016 than they were in 2015. The Jets finished 2016 ranked 31st in Football Outsiders' special teams DVOA ratings, compared to 25th in 2015. Bowles opted not to fire special teams coordinator Brant Boyer, who debuted last season. But it's past time for the Jets to get more from their special teams.

The Jets cut kicker Nick Folk and replaced him with Chandler Catanzaro, which was a curious move, considering Catanzaro made just 75 percent of his field goals last season in Arizona — tied for second worst in the NFL. Folk was eighth (87.1). But Catanzaro is cheaper. The team needs more from Lachlan Edwards, a rookie punter last season. He finished last in the NFL in net yards per punt (37.3).

Since inconsistent return man Jalin Marshall is suspended four games for PEDs, the Jets need to figure out that spot. It's a total mystery right now.

FINAL ANALYSIS Would six or seven wins be enough for Bowles to return in 2018? Maybe. One thing he needs to avoid — the discipline and chemistry issues that plagued the Jets in 2016. If they win five games again (or fewer), it's tough to imagine Johnson would retain Bowles, but whatever happens, Bowles has to keep this locker room together.

Even though Johnson isn't tying the success of this season to wins and losses, there has to be some kind of measurable progress, even as the team gets younger and attempts to build for sustained success — albeit while absorbing some short-term struggles.

What will Johnson do with Maccagnan? Some of that probably depends on what Hackenberg shows in 2017. Maccagnan's reputation with the Jets is very much tied to the Hackenberg pick. But ultimately, Johnson probably will have more patience with Maccagnan — even after a crummy 2017 season — than he will have with Bowles.

If Hackenberg shows some signs of progress in 2017, even if the Jets stumble to a bunch of losses, then that would be a big positive for this organization to take from the season. Maybe it's too soon to ask Hackenberg to take that kind of leap forward. But that's how things work — at least for quarterbacks — in today's ever-impatient NFL.

Forte: Gary Hershorn; Williams: Bruce Schwartzman

2017 VETERAN JETS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
5 Hackenberg, Christian	QB	6-4	228	1	Penn State	D2-16	D2-NYJ-16
15 McCown, Josh	QB	6-4	218	14	Sam Houston St.	FA-Cle-17	D3-Ari-02
9 Petty, Bryce	QB	6-3	230	2	Baylor	D4-15	D4-NYJ-15
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
22 Forté, Matt	RB	6-2	218	9	Tulane	FA-Chi-16	D2-Chi-08
43 Howsare, Julian	FB	6-3	255	1	Clarion	FA-17	FA-NYJ-15
33 Morris, Romar	RB	5-10	190	1	North Carolina	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
29 Powell, Bilal	RB	5-10	204	6	Louisville	D4-11	D4-NYJ-11
34 Wilds, Brandon	RB	6-2	220	1	South Carolina	FA-16	FA-Atl-16
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
11 Anderson, Robby	WR	6-3	190	1	Temple	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
84 Bowman, Braedon	TE	6-4	244	1	South Alabama	W-Jac-16	FA-16
87 Decker, Eric	WR	6-3	214	7	Minnesota	FA-Den-14	D3b-Den-10
81 Enunwa, Quincy	WR	6-2	225	2	Nebraska	D6b-14	D6b-NYJ-14
86 Foxx, Deshon	WR	5-10	177	1	Connecticut	FA-17	FA-Sea-15
14 Hammond, Frankie	WR	6-1	184	2	Florida	FA-17	FA-KC-13
89 Marshall, Jalin	WR	5-10	200	1	Ohio State	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
10 Patton, Quinton	WR	6-0	204	4	Louisiana Tech	FA-SF-17	D4a-SF-13
82 Parker, Brian	TE	6-4	265	1	Albany	FA-17	FA-LAC-15
17 Peake, Charone	WR	6-2	209	1	Clemson	D7b-16	D7b-NYJ-16
10 Ross, Jeremy	WR	6-0	215	5	California	FA-Oak-16	FA-NE-11
88 Seferian-Jenkins, Austin	TE	6-5	262	3	Washington	W-TB-16	D2-TB-14
19 Smith, Devin	WR	6-1	199	2	Ohio State	D2-15	D2-NYJ-15
85 Vander Laan, Jason	TE	6-4	244	1	Ferris State	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
18 White, Myles	WR	6-0	195	3	Louisiana Tech	FA-16	FA-GB-13
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
63 Adams, Jeff	T	6-7	305	2	Columbia	FA-17	FA-Dal-12
Balducci, Alex	OL	6-4	310	1	Oregon	W-SF-17	FA-SF-16
68 Beachum, Kelvin	T	6-3	316	5	SMU	FA-Jac-17	D7d-Pit-12
77 Carpenter, James	G	6-5	321	6	Alabama	FA-Sea-15	D1-Sea-11
70 Dozier, Dakota	G	6-4	313	3	Furman	D4c-14	D4c-NYJ-14
78 Harrison, Jonotthan	C	6-4	300	3	Florida	FA-Ind-17	FA-Ind-14
71 Ijalana, Ben	T	6-4	322	6	Villanova	W-Ind-13	D2-Ind-11
76 Johnson, Wesley	C/G	6-5	297	3	Vanderbilt	W-Pit-14	D5-Pit-14
79 Qvale, Brent	OL	6-7	315	2	Nebraska	FA-14	FA-NYJ-14
72 Shell, Brandon	T	6-5	324	1	South Carolina	D5-16	D5-NYJ-16
64 Watts, Craig	G	6-3	335	1	West Texas A&M	FA-15	FA-LAC-14
67 Winters, Brian	G	6-4	320	4	Kent State	D3-13	D3-NYJ-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
98 Jenkins, Jarvis	DL	6-4	300	6	Clemson	FA-Chi-16	D2-Was-11
99 McLendon, Steve	DL	6-3	310	7	Troy	FA-Pit-16	FA-Pit-09
66 Pelon, Claude	DL	6-4	300	1	USC	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
98 Pennel, Mike	DT	6-4	332	3	Colorado St.-Pueblo	W-GB-17	FA-GB-14
91 Richardson, Sheldon	DL	6-3	294	4	Missouri	D1b-13	D1b-NYJ-13
93 Simon, Deon	DL	6-4	332	1	Northwestern St.	D7-15	D7-NYJ-15
97 Thomas, Lawrence	DL	6-3	286	1	Michigan State	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
96 Wilkerson, Muhammad	DL	6-4	315	6	Temple	D1-11	D1-NYJ-11
92 Williams, Leonard	DL	6-5	302	2	USC	D1-15	D1-NYJ-15
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
57 Beltre, Frank	LB	6-2	246	1	Towson	FA-17	FA-SD-13
56 Bishop, Freddie	LB	6-3	255	1	Western Michigan	FA-15	FA-Det-13
54 Carter, Bruce	LB	6-2	240	6	North Carolina	FA-TB-16	D2-Dal-11
52 Harris, David	LB	6-2	250	10	Michigan	D2-07	D2-NYJ-07
48 Jenkins, Jordan	LB	6-3	259	1	Georgia	D3-16	D3-NYJ-16
50 Lee, Darron	LB	6-1	232	1	Ohio State	D1-16	D1-NYJ-16
44 Lemonier, Corey	LB	6-3	255	4	Auburn	FA-16	D3-SF-13
95 Martin, Josh	LB	6-3	245	4	Columbia	FA-15	FA-KC-13
55 Mauldin, Lorenzo	LB	6-4	259	2	Louisville	D3-15	D3-NYJ-15
51 Stanford, Julian	LB	6-1	230	4	Wagner	FA-17	FA-Jac-12
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
32 Burris, Juston	CB	6-0	212	1	NC State	D4-16	D4-NYJ-16
39 Claiborne, Morris	CB	5-11	192	5	LSU	FA-Dal-17	D1-Dal-12
37 Keeton, Bryson	CB	6-2	190	1	Montana State	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
42 Martin, Ronald	S	6-2	220	2	LSU	W-Sea-15	FA-Sea-15
23 McDougle, Dexter	CB	5-10	195	3	Maryland	D3-14	D3-NYJ-14
36 Middleton, Doug	S	6-0	210	1	Appalachian State	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
45 Miles, Rontez	S	6-0	203	2	California (PA)	FA-13	FA-NYJ-13
35 Ojo, John	CB	6-3	205	1	Florida A&M	FA-17	FA-NYJ-17
25 Pryor, Calvin	S	5-11	207	3	Louisville	D1-14	D1-NYJ-14
27 Roberts, Darryl	CB	6-0	182	2	Marshall	W-NE-16	D7-NE-15
41 Skrine, Buster	CB	5-9	185	6	Chattanooga	FA-Cle-15	D5a-Cle-11
20 Williams, Marcus	CB	5-11	196	3	North Dakota St.	FA-14	FA-Hou-14
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
7 Catanzaro, Chandler	K	6-3	200	3	Clemson	FA-Ari-17	FA-Ari-14
4 Edwards, Lachlan	P	6-4	209	1	Sam Houston St.	D7a-16	D7a-NYJ-16
1 Martin, Ross	K	5-9	183	1	Duke	FA-16	FA-NYJ-16
46 Purdum, Tanner	LS	6-3	270	7	Baker	FA-10	FA-KC-09
47 Triner, Zach	LS	6-3	245	1	Assumption	FA-17	FA-NYJ-17

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	87	Eric Decker	18	ArDarius Stewart (R)
WR	81	Quincy Enunwa	17	Charone Peake
WR	11	Robby Anderson	6	Chad Hansen (R)
LT	68	Kelvin Beachum	71	Ben Ijalana
LG	77	James Carpenter	79	Brent Qvale
C	76	Wesley Johnson	78	Jonotthan Harrison
RG	67	Brian Winters	70	Dakota Dozier
RT	71	Ben Ijalana	72	Brandon Shell
TE	88	Austin Seferian-Jenkins	49	Jordan Leggett (R)
QB	15	Josh McCown	5	Christian Hackenberg
RB	22	Matt Forté	29	Bilal Powell

DEFENSE

DE	96	Muhammad Wilkerson	92	Leonard Williams
DT	99	Steve McLendon	93	Deon Simon
DE	91	Sheldon Richardson	97	Lawrence Thomas
OLB	48	Jordan Jenkins	95	Josh Martin
MLB	52	David Harris	51	Julian Stanford
ILB	50	Darron Lee	51	Julian Stanford
OLB	55	Lorenzo Mauldin	44	Corey Lemonier
CB	39	Morris Claiborne	20	Marcus Williams
CB	41	Buster Skrine	32	Juston Burris
SS	33	Jamal Adams (R)	25	Calvin Pryor
FS	26	Marcus Maye (R)	45	Rontez Miles

SPECIALISTS

K	7	Chandler Catanzaro	KR	89	Jalin Marshall
P	4	Lachlan Edwards	PR	89	Jalin Marshall

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
LT	Kelvin Beachum	Jacksonville
K	Chandler Catanzaro	Arizona
CB	Morris Claiborne	Dallas
QB	Josh McCown	Cleveland

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
K	Nick Folk	Tampa Bay
C	Nick Mangold	Free Agent
WR	Brandon Marshall	N.Y. Giants
CB	Darrelle Revis	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE JETS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP NEW YORK "The Jets took a big step backward last offseason, and it was not unexpected that they struggled in 2016. And it appears that more of the same is in store for 2017 because of their lack of playmaking talent at all of the offensive skill positions. They simply don't have a single player that must be game-planned for by the defense, and the offensive line is not much better. ... Josh McCown was signed as this year's bridge after Ryan Fitzpatrick flopped in his encore performance. ... But who is he 'bridging' to? It's Christian Hackenberg and Bryce Petty for now. Hackenberg gets crushed by internal leaks that say he is not committed and is in no position to be successful as a pro quarterback. ... Defensively, the line still has top-flight talent, but the game has changed, so without a dominant edge pass rusher, their linebackers and defensive backs were exposed all season long. ... David Harris has had a remarkable career with 1,087 tackles during his 10 seasons, and Darron Lee showed signs of becoming an accomplished three-down linebacker as a rookie. ... Darrelle Revis was released in March after his play sank to an embarrassing low. ... Once again, as was the story in 2015 with the selection of Leonard Williams at pick No. 6, arguably the best defensive player in the draft fell in their laps in the form of LSU safety Jamal Adams. Surprisingly, the Jets went safety again in the second round with the selection of Florida's Marcus Maye. ... I don't know how they survive at cornerback with no outside pass rush. ... Even kicker Nick Folk was cut in this roster reset. ... The Jets were [tied for] 31st in turnover margin at minus-20 last year, so to compete at all, that number must be cut in half. ... Regardless, this team will be in the quarterback market for 2018 and could be at the top of the draft."

Adams: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Enunwa: Gary Hershorn

JETS IN THE *DRAFT*

B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	**Jamal Adams**	**S**	**6-0**	**214**	**LSU**
2.	Marcus Maye	S	6-0	210	Florida
3.	ArDarius Stewart	WR	5-11	204	Alabama
4.	Chad Hansen	WR	6-2	202	California
5.	Jordan Leggett	TE	6-5	258	Clemson
5.	Dylan Donahue	OLB	6-3	248	West Georgia
6.	Elijah McGuire	RB	5-10	214	Louisiana-Lafayette
6.	Jeremy Clark	CB	6-3	220	Michigan
6.	Derrick Jones	CB	6-2	188	Ole Miss

The Jets certainly addressed their safety issue in this draft. Can Jamal Adams and Marcus Maye transform a struggling secondary? Back-to-back wide receivers in Rounds 3 and 4 make sense because Devin Smith (a second-round pick in 2015) tore his ACL during offseason workouts. So the Jets need to reload at that position, because Eric Decker isn't getting any younger. Chad Hansen caught 92 passes in a breakout junior season for Cal — after catching only 19 the year before. The Jets had to pick a tight end in this draft. The position is barren for them, outside of (maybe) Austin Seferian-Jenkins. Jordan Leggett made a bunch of big plays for Clemson. No high-profile cornerback for the Jets in this draft. It'll be interesting to see what Dylan Donahue and/or Elijah McGuire can contribute on special teams. Maybe Donahue can chip in as an edge rusher. The Jets' edge-rushing production has been pathetic in recent years.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

EATING CLEAN Matt Forté, the Jets' 31-year-old running back, is so health conscious that he not only avoids carbs, but he also consumes liquefied phytoplankton, in order to combat inflammation. Forté compares his body to a racecar, saying, "You're not going to put oil in the gas tank when you want it to run at top speed. You're going to put the high-performance fuel in it."

LONG ROUTE Rookie outside linebacker Dylan Donahue took a circuitous route to the Jets. Before starring at Division II West Georgia, he spent two years at a California junior college. And before that, he spent a semester out of college — and feeling miserable and cold while helping with his dad's roofing business in Montana. "I was just hating my life," he says. He had failed out of Montana Western, an NAIA school. That's when he went back home and worked on roofs — an experience that pushed him to try football again, at the junior college level.

PREACHING FITNESS Cornerback Buster Skrine spent part of his offseason teaching high-intensity aerobics classes in New York City. Skrine lives just across the Hudson River in New Jersey. But there was a greater purpose to Skrine's aerobics lessons. The classes raised money for charities. One of them was Skrine's foundation, Path Mentorship, which aims to assist single mothers and needy children.

FOOTBALL BLOOD Safety Jamal Adams, whom the Jets drafted sixth overall, is the son of former Giants running back George Adams. George won a Super Bowl ring with the Giants in 1986, even though a hip injury sidelined him that season and shortened his career. When he was a little kid, Jamal loved trying on George's Super Bowl ring. "Pops, one day I'll get one," he'd tell his dad. The Jets sure hope so. They have played in the Super Bowl just once, after the 1968 season. They famously won the game, as Joe Namath guaranteed they would.

FAMOUS GIRLFRIEND You probably haven't heard of running back Brandon Wilds. He landed on the Jets' practice squad in September after going undrafted and had 10 carries in four games. But you've perhaps heard of his girlfriend — pop singer Christina Milian, whose real name is Christine Flores. Wilds is 23 — 12 years younger than Milian.

SPEAKING OF TUNES Wilds isn't the only Jets player whose better half can carry a tune. Jets wide receiver Eric Decker is married to country-pop singer Jessie James Decker. The couple has even recorded a duet of the Christmas song "Baby, It's Cold Outside." Decker jokes that he got a lot of help from post-production editing to make his voice sound better.

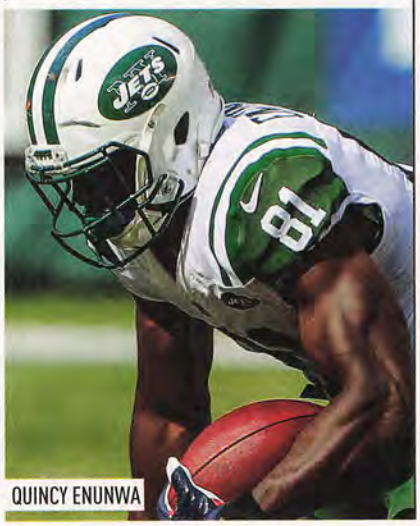
CUBS CONNECTION Wide receiver Jalin Marshall has an interesting connection to the Cubs team that finally broke that infamous World Series drought last year. Marshall played football with Cubs star Kyle Schwarber at Middletown (Ohio) High School. Schwarber, who played linebacker, was a two-sport star in high school, before focusing on baseball. "He was a bad man," Marshall told the Associated Press.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

4.1 The Jets ranked last in the NFL in defensive Adjusted Sack Rate, sacking opposing quarterbacks on just 4.1 percent of their pass snaps.

3.7 New York averaged just 3.7 points per red zone appearance, worst in the NFL.

7.5 The Jets created a turnover on just 7.5 percent of defensive drives, the fourth-worst rate in the NFL.



QUINCY ENUNWA

BALTIMORE RAVENS

When Ravens owner Steve Bisciotti spoke to reporters shortly after a disappointing 2016 season ended, he backed longtime general manager Ozzie Newsome, head coach John Harbaugh and franchise quarterback Joe Flacco.

But Bisciotti noted: "The pitchforks are out. They know it."

Since winning Super Bowl XLVII, the Ravens are 31–33 in the regular season and have missed the playoffs three of the last four years. The stretch has been uncharacteristic for an organization regarded as one of the best in the NFL. Newsome remains one of the league's most well-respected decision makers, and Flacco's contract suggests that he's probably not going anywhere for a few more years. Bisciotti declines to say it's playoffs-or-bust for Harbaugh, but the heat is on the coach as he begins his 10th season.

The defense looks strong, and the Ravens annually have one of the league's best special teams units. The team and perhaps Harbaugh's fate are tied to the play of Flacco, who is coming off arguably the worst season of his career.

OFFENSE The Ravens' front office vowed to get Flacco help this offseason. Yet they didn't sign or draft a top receiver to replace the retiring Steve Smith Sr., and they did little to solidify an offensive line that no longer has starting center Jeremy Zuttah and right tackle Rick Wagner. Through the first two months of free agency, the Ravens' only offensive addition was veteran running back Danny Woodhead, who is essentially a replacement for versatile fullback Kyle Juszczyk.

One of the lowest-ranked passers in the league last year, Flacco should at least be healthy again. He rushed back from the torn left ACL and MCL he suffered in November 2015 and was on the field for the first day of training camp last July. However, Flacco never looked completely comfortable, and the lack of chemistry with several of his pass catchers was evident throughout the season.

The Ravens have challenged Flacco to improve his pocket presence and footwork and to go through his reads more rather than being content to dump balls off to running backs and tight ends. He'll need better protection from an offensive line that is unsettled beyond left tackle Ronnie Stanley and right guard Marshal Yanda. Second-year pro Alex Lewis is better suited for left guard, but the Ravens may move him to right tackle out of necessity. John Urschel and Ryan Jensen will compete for the center job.

Mike Wallace, Breshad Perriman and Chris Moore provide plenty of outside speed, but it's up to the strong-armed Flacco to rediscover his touch on the deep ball and get in sync with his receivers. Flacco and Perriman had frequent miscommunications last year, and that has to change if the 2015 first-round receiver is going to fulfill his potential.

The emergence of a complementary target who will work the middle of the field and make contested catches is a necessity. The Ravens have a cadre of tight ends, led by veterans Dennis Pitta, Benjamin Watson and Crockett Gillmore. Darren Waller, though, is their only tight end with the speed to stretch the field.

The Ravens ran the ball the third-fewest times in the NFL last year, and they know that asking Flacco to carry the offense isn't a winning formula. Harbaugh has promised a greater commitment to the running game, but that's not been offensive coordinator Marty Mornhinweg's trademark as a play caller. Terrance West, Kenneth Dixon — who is suspended for the first four games — and Woodhead are all capable backs. The Ravens will have to grind it out, because none is a home run threat.

DEFENSE Sick of watching a once-vaunted defense give up late scoring drives, Newsome went all in rebuilding this group. He signed defensive backs Tony Jefferson and Brandon Carr in free agency and retained run stuffer Brandon Williams. He then went

AFC NORTH FORECAST

2

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER: Stephen Bisciotti
PRESIDENT: Richard W. Cass
GENERAL MANAGER/EXEC. VP: Ozzie Newsome
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER: Eric DeCosta
SENIOR VP OF FOOTBALL ADMIN.: Pat Moriarty
STADIUM: M&T Bank Stadium (71,008)
SURFACE: Tifway 419 Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.baltimoreravens.com
TICKETS: 1-800-551-7328
TRAINING CAMP: Baltimore Ravens Training Facility (Owings Mills, Md.)

THE COACHES

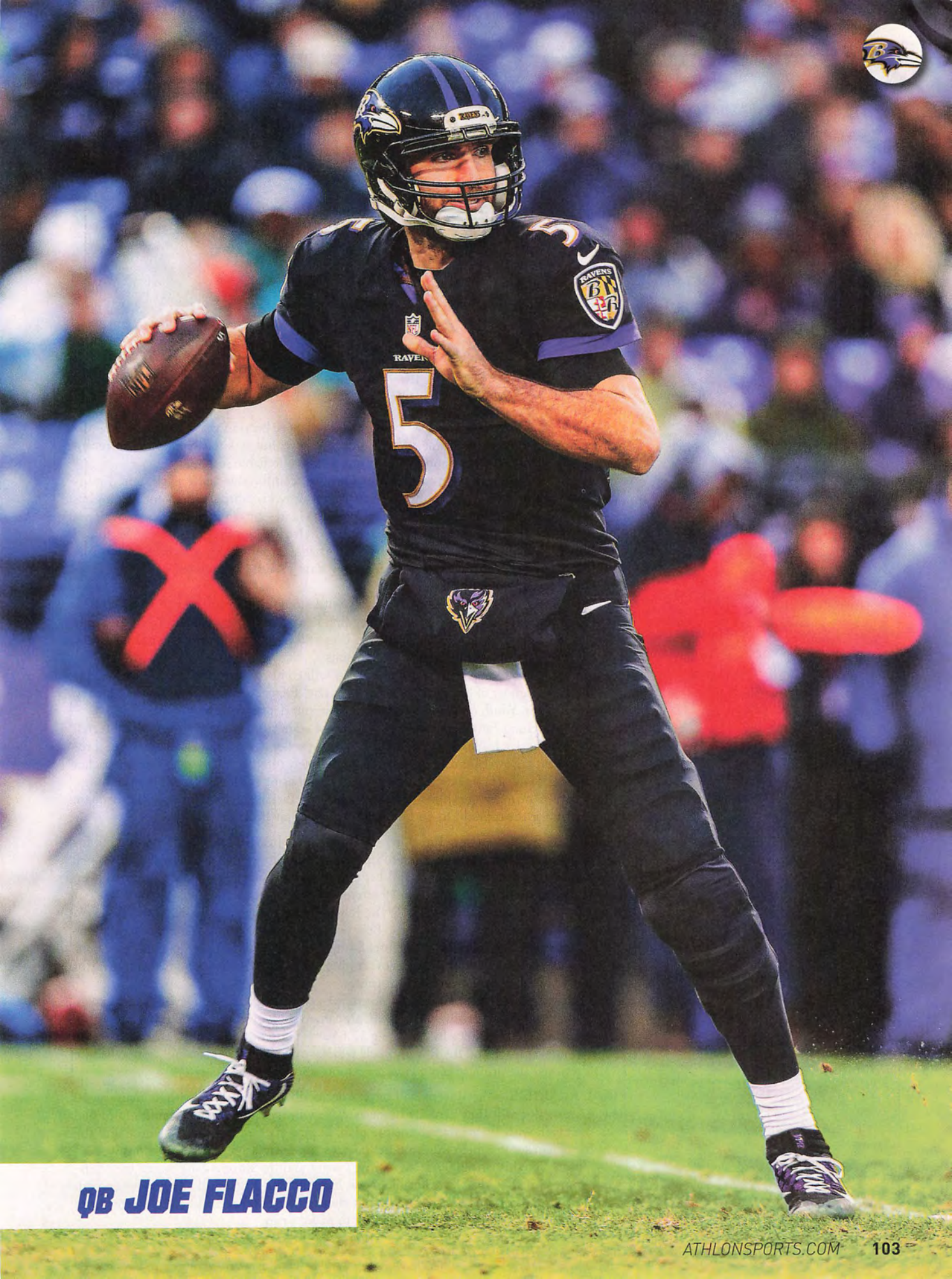
HEAD COACH: John Harbaugh
RECORD WITH TEAM: 85–59
CAREER RECORD: 85–59
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Marty Mornhinweg
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Dean Pees
ASSOCIATE HEAD COACH/SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Jerry Rosburg
SENIOR OFFENSIVE ASSISTANT/TIGHT ENDS: Greg Roman
RUNNING BACKS: Thomas Hammock
WIDE RECEIVERS: Bobby Engram
OFFENSIVE LINE: Joe D'Alessandris
DEFENSIVE LINE: Joe Cullen
LINEBACKERS: Don Martindale
SECONDARY: Chris Hewitt
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Mike Macdonald

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
			2016 NFL RANKINGS				
Sept. 10	at Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Sept. 17	Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Sept. 24	vs. Jacksonville (London)	9:30 am	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Oct. 1	Pittsburgh	1:00	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Oct. 8	at Oakland	4:05	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Oct. 15	Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Oct. 22	at Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Oct. 26	Miami (Thu.)	8:25	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Nov. 5	at Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
BYE							
Nov. 19	at Green Bay	1:00	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Nov. 27	Houston (Mon.)	8:30	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Dec. 3	Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Dec. 10	at Pittsburgh	8:30	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Dec. 17	at Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Dec. 23	Indianapolis	4:30	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Dec. 31	Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)

W. E. Smith II



QB JOE FLACCO

2016 RESULTS (8-8)

Sept. 11	Buffalo	W	13-7
Sept. 18	at Cleveland	W	25-20
Sept. 25	at Jacksonville	W	19-17
Oct. 2	Oakland	L	27-28
Oct. 9	Washington	L	10-16
Oct. 16	at N.Y. Giants	L	23-27
Oct. 23	at N.Y. Jets	L	16-24
Nov. 6	Pittsburgh	W	21-14
Nov. 10	Cleveland	W	28-7
Nov. 20	at Dallas	L	17-27
Nov. 27	Cincinnati	W	19-14
Dec. 4	Miami	W	38-6
Dec. 12	at New England	L	23-30
Dec. 18	Philadelphia	W	27-26
Dec. 25	at Pittsburgh	L	27-31
Jan. 1	at Cincinnati	L	10-27

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Joe Flacco	672	436	4,317	20	15
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Terrance West	193	774	4.0	5	
Kenneth Dixon	88	382	4.3	2	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Dennis Pitta	86	729	8.5	2	
Mike Wallace	72	1,017	14.1	4	
Steve Smith	70	799	11.4	5	
Kyle Juszczyk	37	266	7.2	0	
Terrance West	34	236	6.9	1	
Breshad Perriman	33	499	15.1	3	
Kenneth Dixon	30	162	5.4	1	

KICKING: Justin Tucker, 38-39 FGs, 27-27 PAT, 141 points
TACKLES: Zach Orr, 132; C.J. Mosley, 92
SACKS: Terrell Suggs, 8.0; Timmy Jernigan, 5.0
INTERCEPTIONS: C.J. Mosley, 4; Eric Weddle, 4

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	347.7	17	9
Rushing	91.4	28	16
Passing	256.2	12	5
Scoring	21.4	21	10
Third Down %	36.9	24	11
Punt Returns	7.7	21	10
Kick Returns	22.7	T12	7

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	322.1	7	4
Rushing	89.4	5	3
Passing	232.8	9	5
Scoring	20.1	9	5
Interceptions	18	T1	T1
Sacks	31	T24	T11
Turnover Differential	+5	T9	T5

DENNIS PITTA

defense with his first four draft picks, grabbing a physically gifted cornerback (Marlon Humphrey), two explosive pass rushers (Tyus Bowser and Tim Williams) and a two-way defensive end (Chris Wormley).

On paper, the Ravens are as deep on defense as they've been in years. Defensive coordinator Dean Pees insists he wants to be more aggressive, but he's felt hamstrung in recent seasons by a spotty pass rush and an injury-prone and unreliable secondary.

The Ravens now have four cornerbacks they feel comfortable with as starters. Jimmy Smith is their top cover man, but he needs to stay healthy. His absence in recent seasons has resulted in poor play by the secondary. His durability issues are why the Ravens added Carr, who has never missed a game in his career, and drafted Humphrey, who won't be forced on the field immediately. Slot man Tavon Young had a strong rookie season. At safety, the addition of the hard-hitting Jefferson will allow Eric Weddle to do what he does best — freelance and read quarterbacks.

For the Ravens, it always starts defensively with stopping the run, and that should be a strength once again even after losing starting linemen Timmy Jernigan and Lawrence Guy as well as 2016 leading tackler Zachary Orr. They still have middle linebacker C.J. Mosley, who has recorded 342 tackles in his three seasons.

Wormley, Brent Urban and Bronson Kaufusi will compete to replace Guy, and the Ravens will rotate a host of linemen, including Michael Pierce, Carl Davis and Willie Henry, at Jernigan's spot. Youth up front could be an issue, but depth won't be.

It bears watching how Pees employs his cast of edge rushers. At the very least, Terrell Suggs, the defensive leader and the team's best edge setter against the run, should see a reduction in snaps. Bowser and Matthew Judon will likely rotate at the strong-side linebacker spot. Williams will strictly be a situational pass rusher as he is limited in playing the run.

The Ravens' primary questions defensively are whether Kamalei Correa is an adequate replacement for the retired Orr and whether they can stay healthy.

SPECIALISTS A two-time Pro Bowl selection, kicker Justin Tucker is always looking for ways to get better. But it will be close to impossible for him to improve on his 2016 season. Tucker made 38-of-39 field goals, and his one miss was blocked. His one issue had been long field goals — he made only 8-of-19 attempts from 50 yards or more in 2014-15 — but he was 10-of-10 from 50-plus in 2016. The Ravens believe they're in Tucker's range as soon as they cross the 50-yard line. They also believe that they have one of the best kicking tandems in the league with Tucker and punter Sam Koch. Koch doesn't put up gaudy numbers, but he's traditionally one of the leaders in pinning teams inside the 20, and his wide array of directional kicks helps neutralize return games.

The Ravens got very little from their return game last year, with the Devin Hester experiment falling flat. Wide receiver Michael Campanaro took over on punt returns late in the year and provided some juice by averaging 12.6 yards per return. He's the favorite to be the primary punt returner, and the Ravens likely will have an open preseason audition to handle kickoff returns. The primary candidates are Moore and Dixon.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Ravens will have a decidedly different look with as many as 10 new starters. But will they actually be better? Newsome and company seemingly turned back the clock with their offseason game plan, hoping that an improved defense and the right leg of Tucker will help the team get back to the postseason. The formula has worked before. However, this isn't 2000. It's a scoring league, and the Ravens can't match the offensive firepower of the AFC favorites like New England and Pittsburgh. They have enough talent to contend for a postseason berth, but they're going to need Flacco to up his game and lift an ordinary offensive supporting cast to make a run.

W. E. Smith II

2017 VETERAN RAVENS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
5 Flacco, Joe	QB	6-6	245	9	Delaware	D1-08	D1-Bal-08
15 Mallett, Ryan	QB	6-6	250	6	Arkansas	FA-15	D3-NE-11
2 Vaughan, Dustin	QB	6-5	220	2	West Texas A&M	FA-16	FA-Dal-14
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
37 Allen, Javorius	RB	6-0	222	2	USC	D4b-15	D4b-Bal-15
30 Dixon, Kenneth	RB	5-10	212	1	Louisiana Tech	D4e-16	D4e-Bal-16
43 Houston, Stephen	RB	6-0	225	1	Indiana	FA-16	FA-NE-14
34 Taliaferro, Lorenzo	RB	6-0	225	3	Coastal Carolina	D4b-14	D4b-Bal-14
28 West, Terrance	RB	5-10	225	3	Towson	FA-15	D3-Cle-14
39 Woodhead, Danny	RB	5-8	200	9	Chadron State	FA-NE-13	FA-NYJ-08
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
85 Bell, Kenny	WR	6-1	197	2	Nebraska	FA-16	D5-TB-15
86 Boyle, Nick	TE/FB	6-4	260	2	Delaware	D5a-15	D5a-Bal-15
12 Campanaro, Michael	WR	5-9	191	3	Wake Forest	D7-14	D7-Bal-14
80 Gillmore, Crockett	TE	6-6	260	3	Colorado State	D3b-14	D3b-Bal-14
13 Matthews, Chris	WR	6-5	228	3	Kentucky	FA-15	FA-Cle-11
10 Moore, Chris	WR	6-1	200	1	Cincinnati	D4b-16	D4b-Bal-16
11 Perriman, Breshad	WR	6-2	215	2	UCF	D1-15	D1-Bal-15
88 Pitta, Dennis	TE	6-4	238	7	BYU	D4-10	D4-Bal-10
81 Reynolds, Keenan	WR	5-10	190	1	Navy	D6a-16	D6a-Bal-16
17 Wallace, Mike	WR	6-0	205	8	Ole Miss	FA-16	D3b-Pit-09
84 Waller, Darren	TE	6-6	255	2	Georgia Tech	D6-15	D6-Bal-15
82 Watson, Benjamin	TE	6-3	251	13	Georgia	FA-NO-16	D1-NE-04
87 Williams, Maxx	TE	6-4	257	2	Minnesota	D2-15	D2-Bal-15
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
61 Broxton, Jarell	G	6-3	322	1	Baylor	FA-16	FA-Bal-16
74 Hurst, James	T	6-5	312	3	North Carolina	FA-14	FA-Bal-14
66 Jensen, Ryan	G/C	6-4	310	3	Colorado St.-Pueblo	D6b-13	D6b-Bal-13
72 Lewis, Alex	G/T	6-6	315	1	Nebraska	D4c-16	D4c-Bal-16
67 Nembot, Stephane	T	6-6	320	1	Colorado	FA-16	FA-Bal-16
63 Pughsley, Jarrod	G	6-4	310	2	Akron	FA-16	FA-Dal-14
68 Skura, Matt	C	6-3	305	1	Duke	FA-16	FA-Bal-16
79 Stanley, Ronnie	T	6-6	320	1	Notre Dame	D1-16	D1-Bal-16
64 Urschel, John	G/C	6-3	300	3	Penn State	D5-14	D5-Bal-14
77 Wesley, De'Ondre	G/T	6-6	326	2	BYU	FA-15	FA-Bal-15
73 Yanda, Marshal	G/T	6-3	305	10	Iowa	D3b-07	D3b-Bal-07
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
94 Davis, Carl	DT	6-5	327	2	Iowa	D3-15	D3-Bal-15
69 Henry, Willie	DT	6-3	300	1	Michigan	D4d-16	D4d-Bal-16
92 Kaufusi, Bronson	DE	6-6	285	1	BYU	D3-16	D3-Bal-16
95 Lewis-Moore, Kapron	DE	6-4	315	4	Notre Dame	D6a-13	D6a-Bal-13
97 Pierce, Michael	DT	6-0	339	1	Samford	FA-16	FA-Bal-16
96 Urban, Brent	DE	6-7	300	3	Virginia	D4a-14	D4a-Bal-14
98 Williams, Brandon	DT	6-1	340	4	Missouri Southern	D3-13	D3-Bal-13
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
45 Beyer, Brennen	OLB	6-4	256	1	Michigan	FA-15	FA-Bal-15
51 Correa, Kamalei	LB	6-3	250	1	Boise State	D2-16	D2-Bal-16
99 Judon, Matthew	OLB	6-3	275	1	Grand Valley St.	D5-16	D5-Bal-16
47 Lokombo, Boseko	LB	6-3	240	1	Oregon	FA-17	FA-Bal-17
59 Louis, Lamar	ILB	5-11	232	1	LSU	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
50 McClellan, Albert	LB	6-2	250	6	Marshall	FA-10	FA-Bal-10
57 Mosley, C.J.	ILB	6-2	241	3	Alabama	D1-14	D1-Bal-14
48 Onwuasor, Patrick	ILB	6-0	217	1	Portland State	FA-16	FA-Bal-16
54 Orr, Zachary	ILB	6-0	225	3	North Texas	FA-14	FA-Bal-14
90 Smith, Za'Darius	OLB	6-4	275	2	Kentucky	D4a-15	D4a-Bal-15
55 Suggs, Terrell	OLB	6-3	265	14	Arizona State	D1a-03	D1a-Bal-03
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
35 Arrington, Kyle	CB	5-10	186	8	Hofstra	FA-15	FA-Phi-08
39 Canady, Maurice	CB	6-1	193	1	Virginia	D6b-16	D6b-Bal-16
24 Carr, Brandon	CB	6-0	210	9	Grand Valley State	FA-Dal-17	D5-KC-08
40 Daniel, Robertson	CB	6-1	205	1	BYU	FA-16	FA-Oak-15
42 Foster, Otha	DB	6-0	204	1	West Alabama	FA-17	FA-KC-13
23 Jefferson, Tony	S	5-11	212	4	Oklahoma	FA-Ari-17	FA-Ari-13
41 Levine Sr., Anthony	DB	5-11	200	5	Tennessee State	FA-12	FA-GB-10
27 Price, Sheldon	CB	6-2	194	1	UCLA	FA-15	FA-Ind-13
38 Rolle, Jumal	CB	6-0	190	3	Catawba	FA-15	FA-Buf-13
22 Smith, Jimmy	CB	6-2	210	6	Colorado	D1-11	D1-Bal-11
21 Webb, Lardarius	DB	5-10	182	8	Nicholls State	D3-09	D3-Bal-09
32 Weddle, Eric	S	5-11	195	10	Utah	FA-LAC-16	D2-LAC-07
25 Young, Tavon	CB	5-9	177	1	Temple	D4a-16	D4a-Bal-16
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
46 Cox, Morgan	LS	6-4	233	7	Tennessee	FA-10	FA-Bal-10
4 Koch, Sam	P	6-1	222	11	Nebraska	D6a-06	D6a-Bal-06
9 Tucker, Justin	K	6-1	180	5	Texas	FA-12	FA-Bal-12

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	17	Mike Wallace	12	Michael Campanaro
WR	11	Breshad Perriman	10	Chris Moore
LT	79	Ronnie Stanley	77	De'Ondre Wesley
LG	72	Alex Lewis	65	Nico Siragusa (R)
C	64	John Urschel	66	Ryan Jensen
RG	73	Marshal Yanda	71	Jermaine Eluemunor (R)
RT	74	James Hurst	67	Stephane Nembot
TE	88	Dennis Pitta	82	Benjamin Watson
QB	5	Joe Flacco	15	Ryan Mallett
RB	28	Terrance West	30	Kenneth Dixon
RB	39	Danny Woodhead	86	Nick Boyle

DEFENSE

DE	92	Bronson Kaufusi	93	Chris Wormley (R)
DT	98	Brandon Williams	69	Willie Henry
DT	97	Michael Pierce	94	Carl Davis
OLB	55	Terrell Suggs	56	Tim Williams (R)
MLB	57	C.J. Mosley	50	Albert McClellan
WLB	51	Kamalei Correa	48	Patrick Onwuasor
OLB	99	Matthew Judon	53	Tyus Bowser (R)
CB	22	Jimmy Smith	25	Tavon Young
CB	24	Brandon Carr	29	Marlon Humphrey (R)
FS	32	Eric Weddle	21	Lardarius Webb
SS	23	Tony Jefferson	41	Anthony Levine Sr.

SPECIALISTS

K	9	Justin Tucker	KR	10	Chris Moore
P	4	Sam Koch	PR	12	Michael Campanaro

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
CB	Brandon Carr	Dallas
S	Tony Jefferson	Arizona
RB	Danny Woodhead	San Diego

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
OLB	Elvis Dumervil	Free agent
DE	Lawrence Guy	New England
DT	Timmy Jernigan	Philadelphia
FB	Kyle Juszczyk	San Francisco
ILB	Zachary Orr	Retired
WR	Steve Smith Sr.	Retired
OT	Rick Wagner	Detroit
C	Jeremy Zuttah	San Francisco

SCOUTING THE RAVENS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP BALTIMORE "Huge year for John Harbaugh in 2017 after the Ravens have missed the playoffs three of the past four seasons. ... They keep trying to build around Joe Flacco but have not improved their run game, which is the biggest issue. ... Flacco is not mobile enough to flourish without sound protection, and the offensive line will have two new starters in John Urschel at center and likely James Hurst at right tackle. ... While right guard Marshal Yanda is arguably the league's best interior lineman, running back Kenneth Dixon will miss the first four games due to a PED suspension, so questions abound at running back. ... Baltimore continues to wait on Breshad Perriman to emerge as a big-play wide receiver, but he has only flashed and is on the verge of being another wideout bust for this organization. ... They spent huge dollars to extend Brandon Williams, but he is more of an early-down run defender than actual pass rusher. ... Linebacker Zachary Orr led the team in tackles for 2016 but unexpectedly retired during the spring. ... C.J. Mosley should return to top form with a healthy offseason. ... The Ravens have constructed a veteran secondary after having some missed draft picks back there (Matt Elam and Terrence Brooks). ... After they added Eric Weddle last year, corner Brandon Carr (Cowboys) and safety Tony Jefferson from the Cardinals were signed this spring. ... In the draft, they stayed married to Alabama cornerback Marlon Humphrey at pick No. 16, despite there being better players on the board. He will be tested early and often because of his struggles playing the football in the air. ... This is a classic 8–8 kind of club, caught between the tease of a veteran push to get over the top and the reality of a youth movement to start over."

RAVENS IN THE *DRAFT* B+

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Marlon Humphrey	CB	6-0	197	Alabama
2.	Tyus Bowser	OLB	6-3	247	Houston
3.	Chris Wormley	DE	6-5	298	Michigan
3.	Tim Williams	OLB	6-3	244	Alabama
4.	Nico Siragusa	G	6-4	319	San Diego State
5.	Jermaine Eluemunor	OT	6-4	332	Texas A&M
6.	Chuck Clark	S	6-0	208	Virginia Tech

Despite a seemingly obvious need for playmakers, the Ravens didn't pick a single player from an offensive skill position for the first time in team history. They used the draft to continue strengthening their defense. Marlon Humphrey will likely start the season as the team's No. 3 corner. Jimmy Smith's injury history suggests that Humphrey will play plenty. Tyus Bowser will compete for the starting strong-side linebacker job, and Chris Wormley may start at defensive end. Defensive coordinator Dean Pees wants to ramp up the quarterback pressure and he'll find ways to get Bowser and Tim Williams on the field. Bowser, Williams and Wormley combined for 46 sacks over their final two college seasons. Nico Siragusa has a chance to play immediately at either guard or center.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

SMOKIN' JOE Joe Flacco's footwork has been the subject of much criticism in recent years as the quarterback developed a bad habit of throwing off his back foot and not stepping up in the pocket. Seeking to address some of those issues and improve his balance and agility, Flacco incorporated boxing into his training regimen this offseason. He worked out at Philadelphia's Joe Hand Boxing Gym.

HE RECRUITS, TOO Safety Eric Weddle became one of general manager Ozzie Newsome's chief recruiters this offseason. He aggressively wooed running back Danny Woodhead, his former Chargers teammate, to Baltimore. He also made a pitch to free agent Tony Jefferson, dropping into the safety's Twitter question-and-answer session with fans. About two-and-a-half weeks later, Jefferson signed with the Ravens, turning down more lucrative offers from Cleveland and the N.Y. Jets.

ROUGH INTRODUCTION Jefferson, the Ravens' biggest free-agent acquisition, was born in San Diego, went to college at Oklahoma and played his first four NFL seasons with the Arizona Cardinals. His first week in his new city coincided with one of the only snowstorms all winter in the Baltimore area. Rather than Jefferson braving the elements, Weddle picked him up and drove him to a workout. Soon after, Jefferson was on a suburban Baltimore road when a deer ran in front of his truck. He vowed never to drive at night again.

BIG SPENDER Marveling at how far he's come, Brandon Williams choked up several times after signing a five-year, $54 million deal in March that made him the highest-paid nose tackle in the league. Williams was homeless at one point as a kid, and leading up to the 2013 NFL Draft — when the Ravens picked him in the third round — he held a job loading port-a-potty toilets on and off trailers. He said his first big expenditure with his new contract was going to be his offseason wedding.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION The Ravens' roster isn't the only thing that underwent a facelift this offseason. The team embarked on a $45 million renovation project of their training facility, the Under Armour Performance Center. The team also began a three-year, $144 million renovation of M&T Bank Stadium that will add elevators and escalators, enlarge end zone video boards and improve the stadium's sound system.

CENTER OF ATTENTION Ravens center John Urschel prepared for another NFL season and a summer competition for the Ravens starting center job by hitting the classroom. Urschel, a highly celebrated mathematician, returned to MIT for a second straight offseason to continue his pursuit of a Ph.D. Urschel is studying numerical linear algebra, spectral graph theory and machine learning.

LEAVING WITH NO REGRETS Weak-side linebacker Zachary Orr went from a little-known undrafted linebacker out of North Texas to the Ravens' leading tackler in 2016. The feel-good story ended on a down note when Orr, weeks away from a lucrative restricted free-agent contract tender, retired at the age of 24 because of a congenital neck/spine condition that was discovered in a postseason CT scan. Smiling throughout his retirement news conference, Orr said, "Instead of asking, 'Why me?' ask 'What's next?'"

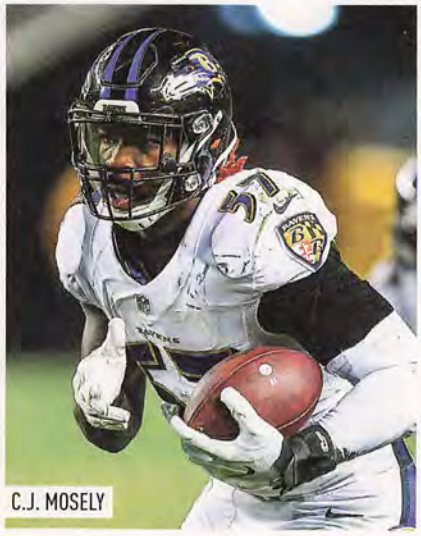
NUMBERS TO KNOW

11.8 The Ravens finished tied for second in the league in broken tackles as an offense, creating them on 11.8 percent of offensive snaps.

50 Just 50 percent of runs against the Ravens on third-and-short, fourth-and-short and goal-to-go achieved a first down or touchdown, a rate that was third best for a defense in the league.

600 Joe Flacco was one of two starting quarterbacks with 600 or more pass attempts and a negative DVOA* rating.

(*-DVOA is a metric that measures success rate on a down-by-down basis and compares it against defensive strength of schedule and average success rates.)



C.J. MOSELY

Humphrey: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Mosley: Joe Sargent/Getty Images

CINCINNATI BENGALS

AFC NORTH FORECAST

3

The Bengals' recent struggles in the postseason overshadowed the fact that this was one of the NFL's most consistent franchises from 2011-15. The team reached the playoffs in each of those seasons and won at least 10 games four times.

That run of success came to a sudden end in 2016 as the Bengals suffered their first losing season (6–9–1) since Andy Dalton arrived as an unheralded rookie. Now, after a second consecutive offseason filled with quality veteran departures, pressure is mounting on the draft classes of the past three seasons to lead this club back to the playoffs. This includes the influx of 11 rookies in 2016 and three picks from the first four rounds over the previous two years who have yet to see the field due to injury.

The offense will still be built around Dalton and standout wide receiver A.J. Green, but this team's success will be determined by an offensive line filled with question marks.

The talented defense will hope to continue its momentum after the unit ranked among the best in the league in the second half after struggling early in the season.

OFFENSE Dalton has never been regarded as a top-tier NFL quarterback, but the former second-round pick out of TCU continues to put up quality numbers. In 2016, he threw for 4,206 yards (87 shy of his career high) and completed 64.7 percent of his passes. His best quality might be his durability; in six seasons, he has missed only three starts.

Green missed out on his sixth straight 1,000-yard season due a hamstring injury that forced him to miss six games. He still caught 66 passes for 964 yards — but had only four touchdowns, the fewest of his career.

The Bengals added to their outstanding group of skill position players in the draft, selecting wide receiver John Ross, who ran the fastest 40-yard dash time ever at the Scouting Combine, and controversial but talented running back Joe Mixon.

Dalton expects to have a healthy Tyler Eifert, who has dominated in the red zone when healthy but hasn't been able to stay on the field. Tyler Boyd enters his second season after making significant strides in route running and aggressive play in the slot over the final half of 2016. Toss in veteran backs Gio Bernard and Jeremy Hill as part of a rotation, and there will be no shortage of weapons.

But none of it will matter if the offensive line experiment blows up. Pro Bowl left tackle Andrew Whitworth left for the Los Angeles Rams, and Kevin Zeitler bolted for Cleveland, where he signed a $60 million deal. Left in their wake is Cedric Ogbuehi, who will start at left tackle coming off a season in which he bombed as the starting right tackle and was benched midseason. The Bengals drafted Ogbuehi in the first round in 2015 and have to trust he can improve enough to protect Dalton's blind side. Jake Fisher, the second-round pick in 2015, will start at right tackle for the first full season. He showed a flash of promise taking over the position at the end of last season but now must prove he can get the job done over the course of the entire campaign. The Bengals are asking former first-round pick Andre Smith — who re-signed with the team after a one-year stint in Minnesota — to shift inside to guard, a position he's never played. He must prove he can remain healthy after missing 21 games the last three years. Russell Bodine is back at center after progressing from liability to mediocrity. Veteran Clint Boling returns at left guard.

DEFENSE This group figures to open the season with a ton of confidence. They finished third in the NFL in points against in the second half of the season and have All-Pro defensive tackle Geno Atkins still in his prime as well as two-time Pro Bowler Carlos Dunlap on the edge.

But the Bengals still need more from their pass rush. They finished in the bottom half of the league in sacks per pass play for the fourth straight season. They'll turn to a rotation that includes two 2017 draft picks on

THE ORGANIZATION

PRESIDENT: Mike Brown
SENIOR VP OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Pete Brown
EXECUTIVE VP: Katie Blackburn
VP OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Paul Brown
DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Duke Tobin
STADIUM: Paul Brown Stadium (65,515)
SURFACE: UBU Speed Series S5-M
WEBSITE: www.bengals.com
TICKETS: 866-621-8383
TRAINING CAMP: Paul Brown Stadium (Cincinnati, Ohio)

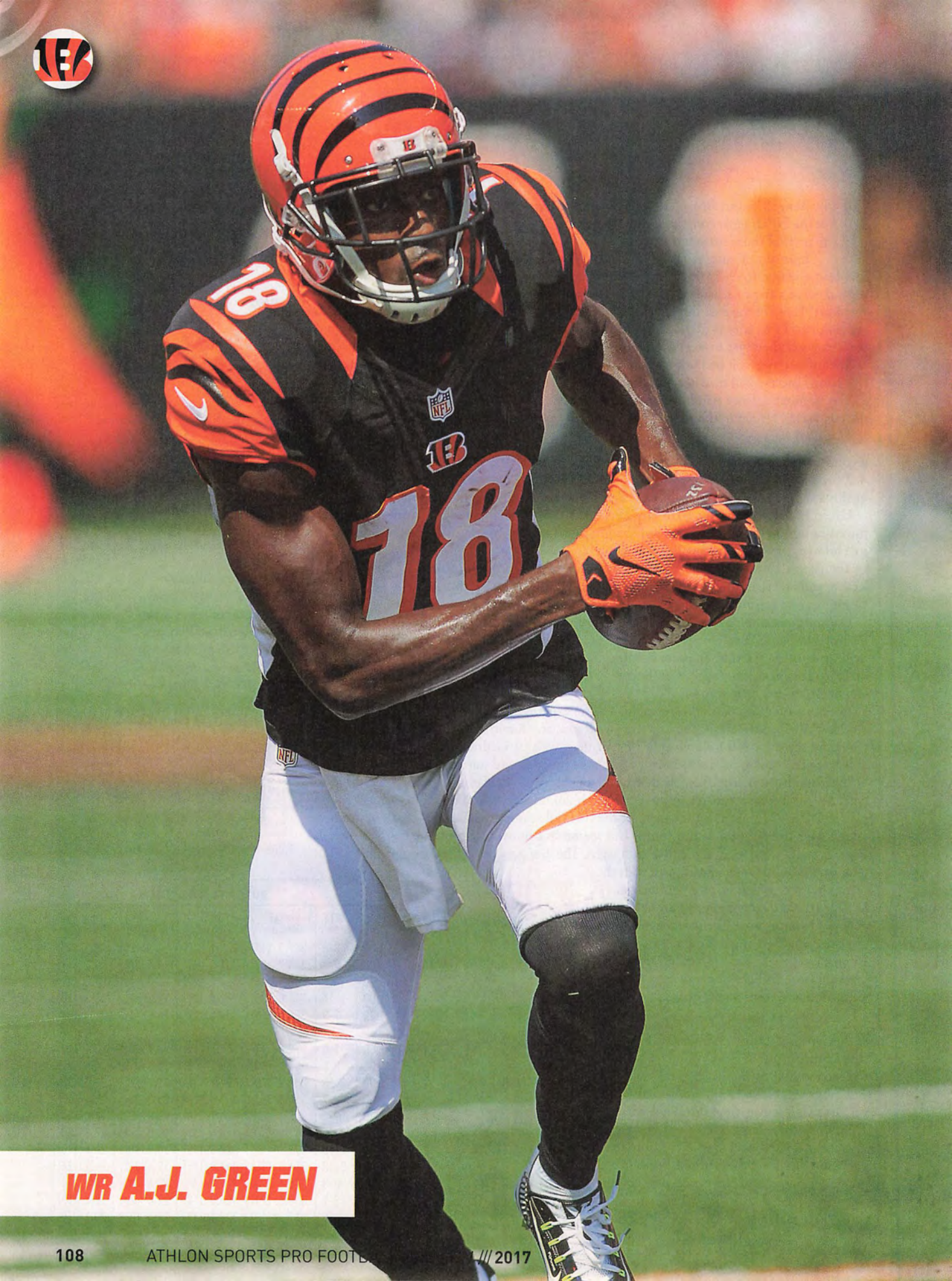
THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Marvin Lewis
RECORD WITH TEAM: 118–103–3
CAREER RECORD: 118–103–3
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Ken Zampese
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Paul Guenther
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Darrin Simmons
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/OFFENSIVE LINE: Paul Alexander
QUARTERBACKS: Bill Lazor
RUNNING BACKS: Kyle Caskey
WIDE RECEIVERS: James Urban
TIGHT ENDS: Jonathan Hayes
DEFENSIVE LINE: Jacob Burney
LINEBACKERS: Jim Haslett
SECONDARY: Kevin Coyle

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Sept. 14	Houston (Thu.)	8:25	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Sept. 24	at Green Bay	4:25	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Oct. 1	at Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Oct. 8	Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
BYE							
Oct. 22	at Pittsburgh	1:00	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Oct. 29	Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Nov. 5	at Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Nov. 12	at Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Nov. 19	at Denver	4:25	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Nov. 26	Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Dec. 4	Pittsburgh (Mon.)	8:30	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Dec. 10	Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Dec. 17	at Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Dec. 24	Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Dec. 31	at Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)



WR A.J. GREEN

2016 RESULTS (6-9-1)

Sept. 11	at N.Y. Jets	W	23-22
Sept. 18	at Pittsburgh	L	16-24
Sept. 25	Denver	L	17-29
Sept. 29	Miami	W	22-7
Oct. 9	at Dallas	L	14-28
Oct. 16	at New England	L	17-35
Oct. 23	Cleveland	W	31-17
Oct. 30	Washington (ot)	T	27-27
Nov. 14	at N.Y. Giants	L	20-21
Nov. 20	Buffalo	L	12-16
Nov. 27	at Baltimore	L	14-19
Dec. 4	Philadelphia	W	32-14
Dec. 11	at Cleveland	W	23-10
Dec. 18	Pittsburgh	L	20-24
Dec. 24	at Houston	L	10-12
Jan. 1	Baltimore	W	27-10

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Andy Dalton	563	364	4,206	18	8
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Jeremy Hill	222	839	3.8	9	
Rex Burkhead	74	344	4.6	2	
Giovani Bernard	91	337	3.7	2	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
A.J. Green	66	964	14.6	4	
Brandon LaFell	64	862	13.5	6	
Tyler Boyd	54	603	11.2	1	
Giovani Bernard	39	336	8.6	1	
Tyler Eifert	29	394	13.6	5	
C.J. Uzomah	25	234	9.4	1	

KICKING: Mike Nugent, 23-29 FGs, 23-29 PAT, 92 points
TACKLES: Karlos Dansby, 114; Vontaze Burfict, 101
SACKS: Geno Atkins, 9.0; Carlos Dunlap, 8.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Three players tied with 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	356.9	13	6
Rushing	110.6	13	8
Passing	246.4	15	7
Scoring	20.3	24	12
Third Down %	39.0	15	7
Punt Returns	6.5	28	14
Kick Returns	25.7	3	1

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	350.8	17	9
Rushing	113.2	21	9
Passing	237.5	11	6
Scoring	19.7	8	4
Interceptions	17	T4	4
Sacks	33	T19	T7
Turnover Differential	+3	12	7

ANDY DALTON

the edge (Jordan Willis and Carl Lawson) as well as a competition of previously injured draft picks (Marcus Hardison, Andrew Billings) next to Atkins on the interior.

Right end Michael Johnson showed very little pass-rush production and needs his snaps curtailed in 2016; he played 77 percent a year ago. That's where the Bengals hope third-round pick Willis and fourth-rounder Lawson can help. Both specialized in rushing the QB in college, and they'll battle to join a rotation on passing downs.

More pressure sets up opportunity for the bevy of playmakers in the secondary, which still — to the surprise of many — includes Adam Jones. Team owner Mike Brown elected to keep his troubled 33-year-old corner despite an arrest in January that included a video in which he told a Cincinnati police officer: "I hope you die tomorrow."

The Bengals go four deep with first-rounders at the cornerback position. Dre Kirkpatrick, a 2012 first-rounder, returns after inking a $52 million deal as the top Bengals free-agent priority. Also, the team exercised the fifth-year option of 2014 first-round pick Darqueze Dennard. Then there's 2016 first-rounder William Jackson. He never saw the field last year after a pectoral injury ended his rookie campaign before it started. The competition for snaps will be intense.

There is also an element of a youth movement, as longtime Bengals starters Domata Peko and Rey Maualuga were let go, along with 35-year-old linebacker Karlos Dansby. Coordinator Paul Guenther acknowledges that the team looked old and slow at times last year. Free-agent signee Kevin Minter, 26, will add some youth after coming over from Arizona. He'll start next to a focused Vontaze Burfict, who is ready for the best year of his career. The polarizing linebacker has adhered to a strict weight-training program and enters his contract year with a focus lacking in recent seasons. If he can play at his top level — and stay off the suspended list — Burfict brings an All-Pro talent to the middle of the defense and changes the playmaking dynamic of the whole group.

SPECIALISTS There will be a competition in training camp for the placekicking position. Mike Nugent held the spot for years, but he was cut in December after a run of missed field goals. Veteran Randy Bullock returns after taking over for Nugent the final three games. He'll battle fifth-round pick Jake Elliott, hand-picked as the top kicker in the draft by Bengals special teams coordinator Darrin Simmons. Elliott showed efficiency from deep at Memphis, connecting on 3-of-4 from 50-plus the last two years. The club would prefer Elliott win the battle — that's why you invest a fifth-round pick — but it will come down to who looks best in preseason. Longtime punter Kevin Huber and long snapper Clark Harris both return.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Bengals took a step back last year, failing to make the playoffs for the first time since 2010. But those five consecutive playoff berths didn't provide a single playoff victory, and the Bengals still hold the longest drought without a postseason victory in the NFL. The last win came on Jan. 6, 1991.

Too many players who played key roles in the run of success departed for bigger contracts elsewhere in recent years, and not enough of the team's draft picks stepped in and played well enough. The team is still looking for the next Marvin Jones or Mohamed Sanu. Or the next Kevin Zeitler or Andrew Whitworth.

In recent years, the path for the next generation of players to prove themselves was blocked by a loaded roster. That's no longer the case. The path is now clear for some of the team's unproven players to step into prominent roles. If they succeed, the Bengals could play their way back in the postseason. If not, they might find themselves in a fight to hold off the Browns to stay out of the cellar in the AFC North.

John Grieshop/Getty Images; Dalton: Gary Hershorn

2017 VETERAN BENGALS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
14 Dalton, Andy	QB	6-2	220	6	TCU	D2-11	D2-Cin-11
6 Driskel, Jeff	QB	6-4	231	1	Louisiana Tech	W-SF-16	D6-SF-16
5 McCarron, AJ	QB	6-3	220	2	Alabama	D5-14	D5-Cin-14
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
25 Bernard, Giovani	RB	5-9	205	4	North Carolina	D2a-13	D2a-Cin-13
39 Carson, Tra	RB	5-11	231	1	Texas A&M	FA-16	FA-Cin-16
32 Hill, Jeremy	RB	6-1	235	3	LSU	D2-14	D2-Cin-14
30 Peerman, Cedric	RB	5-10	212	7	Virginia	W-Det-10	D6-Bal-09
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
83 Boyd, Tyler	WR	6-2	197	1	Pittsburgh	D2-16	D2-Cin-16
88 Brown, Chris	WR	6-2	195	1	Notre Dame	W-Dal-17	FA-Dal-16
16 Core, Cody	WR	6-3	210	1	Ole Miss	D6-16	D6-Cin-16
85 Eifert, Tyler	TE	6-6	255	4	Notre Dame	D1-13	D1-Cin-13
12 Erickson, Alex	WR	6-0	195	1	Wisconsin	FA-16	FA-Cin-16
18 Green, A.J.	WR	6-4	210	6	Georgia	D1-11	D1-Cin-11
89 Hewitt, Ryan	TE	6-4	255	3	Stanford	FA-14	FA-Cin-14
81 Kroft, Tyler	TE	6-6	250	2	Rutgers	D3a-15	D3a-Cin-15
84 Kumerow, Jake	WR	6-4	206	1	Wisconsin-White	FA-15	FA-Cin-15
11 LaFell, Brandon	WR	6-3	210	7	LSU	FA-NE-16	D3a-Car-10
17 Russell, Alonzo	WR	6-4	206	1	Toledo	FA-16	FA-Cin-16
87 Uzomah, C.J.	TE	6-6	265	2	Auburn	D5-15	D5-Cin-15
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
61 Bodine, Russell	C	6-3	308	3	North Carolina	D4-14	D4-Cin-14
65 Boling, Clint	G	6-5	305	6	Georgia	D4-11	D4-Cin-11
74 Fisher, Jake	T	6-6	305	2	Oregon	D2-15	D2-Cin-15
66 Hopkins, Trey	G	6-3	310	2	Texas	FA-14	FA-Cin-14
60 Johnson, T.J.	G/C	6-4	300	3	South Carolina	D7b-13	D7b-Cin-13
70 Ogbuehi, Cedric	T	6-5	310	2	Texas A&M	D1-15	D1-Cin-15
62 Redmond, Alex	G	6-5	310	1	UCLA	FA-16	FA-Cin-16
71 Smith, Andre	G/T	6-4	325	7	Alabama	FA-Min-17	D1-Cin-09
63 Westerman, Christian	G	6-3	300	1	Arizona State	D5-16	D5-Cin-16
73 Winston, Eric	T	6-7	310	10	Miami	FA-14	D3-Hou-06
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
97 Atkins, Geno	DT	6-1	300	7	Georgia	D4a-10	D4a-Cin-10
75 Billings, Andrew	DT	6-1	325	1	Baylor	D4-16	D4-Cin-16
76 Brown, Ryan	DE	6-6	276	1	Mississippi State	FA-16	FA-Cin-16
93 Clarke, Will	DE	6-6	280	3	West Virginia	D3-14	D3-Cin-14
71 Dean, David	DT	6-1	302	1	Virginia	FA-16	FA-Cin-16
96 Dunlap, Carlos	DE	6-6	280	7	Florida	D2-10	D2-Cin-10
95 Gilberry, Wallace	DE	6-2	270	9	Alabama	FA-16	FA-NYG-08
91 Hardison, Marcus	DT	6-3	310	2	Arizona State	D4b-15	D4b-Cin-15
90 Johnson, Michael	DE	6-7	272	8	Georgia Tech	FA-15	D3a-Cin-09
92 Sims, Pat	DT	6-2	330	9	Auburn	FA-Oak-15	D3a-Cin-08
94 Smith, Chris	DE	6-1	262	3	Arkansas	T-Jac-17	D5b-Jac-14
98 Thompson, Brandon	DT	6-2	310	5	Clemson	D3b-12	D3b-Cin-12
69 Williams, DeShawn	DT	6-1	295	1	Clemson	FA-15	FA-Cin-15
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
49 Albright, Bryson	LB	6-5	225	1	Miami (OH)	FA-17	FA-Buf-16
55 Burfict, Vontaze	LB	6-1	255	5	Arizona State	FA-12	FA-Cin-12
47 Dawson, P.J.	LB	6-0	245	2	TCU	D3b-15	D3b-Cin-15
53 Flowers, Marquis	LB	6-3	245	3	Arizona	D6-14	D6-Cin-14
51 Minter, Kevin	LB	6-0	246	4	LSU	FA-Ari-17	D2-Ari-13
57 Rey, Vincent	LB	6-0	250	6	Duke	FA-10	FA-Cin-10
59 Vigil, Nick	LB	6-2	239	1	Utah State	D3-16	D3-Cin-16
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
23 Benwikere, Bene	CB	6-0	195	3	San Jose State	FA-17	D5-Car-14
21 Dennard, Darqueze	CB	5-11	198	3	Michigan State	D1-14	D1-Cin-14
42 Fejedelem, Clayton	S	6-0	205	1	Illinois	D7-16	D7-Cin-16
43 Iloka, George	S	6-4	225	5	Boise State	D5c-12	D5c-Cin-12
22 Jackson, William	CB	6-0	187	1	Houston	D1-16	D1-Cin-16
24 Jones, Adam	CB	5-10	180	10	West Virginia	FA-10	D1-Ten-05
27 Kirkpatrick, Dre	CB	6-2	185	5	Alabama	D1a-12	D1a-Cin-12
29 McRae, Tony	CB	5-10	185	1	North Carolina A&T	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
20 Russell, KeiVarae	CB	5-11	196	1	Notre Dame	W-KC-16	D3-KC-16
26 Shaw, Josh	CB	6-1	200	2	USC	D4a-15	D4a-Cin-15
31 Smith, Derron	S	5-10	200	2	Fresno State	D6-15	D6-Cin-15
36 Williams, Shawn	S	6-0	210	4	Georgia	D3-13	D3-Cin-13
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
7 Brown, Jonathan	K	5-10	197	1	Louisville	FA-16	FA-Cin-16
4 Bullock, Randy	K	5-9	206	5	Texas A&M	W-Pit-16	D5-Hou-12
46 Harris, Clark	LS	6-5	250	8	Rutgers	FA-09	D7-GB-07
10 Huber, Kevin	P	6-1	211	8	Cincinnati	D5-09	D5-Cin-09

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	18	A.J. Green	83	Tyler Boyd
WR	11	Brandon LaFell	15	John Ross (R)
LT	70	Cedric Ogbuehi	73	Eric Winston
LG	65	Clint Boling	63	Christian Westerman
C	61	Russell Bodine	64	J.J. Dielman (R)
RG	71	Andre Smith	60	T.J. Johnson
RT	74	Jake Fisher	71	Andre Smith
TE	85	Tyler Eifert	87	C.J. Uzomah
QB	14	Andy Dalton	5	AJ McCarron
RB	28	Joe Mixon (R)	32	Jeremy Hill
RB	25	Giovani Bernard	30	Cedric Peerman

DEFENSE

DE	96	Carlos Dunlap	93	Will Clarke
DT	97	Geno Atkins	91	Marcus Hardison
DT	75	Andrew Billings	92	Pat Sims
DE	90	Michael Johnson	99	Jordan Willis (R)
SLB	59	Nick Vigil	50	Jordan Evans (R)
MLB	51	Kevin Minter	57	Vincent Rey
WLB	55	Vontaze Burfict	53	Marquis Flowers
CB	24	Adam Jones	21	Darqueze Dennard
CB	27	Dre Kirkpatrick	22	William Jackson
S	43	George Iloka	31	Derron Smith
S	36	Shawn Williams	42	Clayton Fejedelem

SPECIALISTS

K	3	Jake Elliott (R)	KR	15	John Ross (R)
P	10	Kevin Huber	PR	24	Adam Jones

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
LB	Kevin Minter	Arizona
OL	Andre Smith	Minnesota
DL	Chris Smith	Jacksonville

KEY LOSSES −

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
LB	Karlos Dansby	Arizona
DL	Margus Hunt	Indianapolis
LB	Rey Maualuga	Free Agent
DL	Domata Peko	Denver
OT	Andrew Whitworth	L.A. Rams
OG	Kevin Zeitler	Cleveland

SCOUTING THE BENGALS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP CINCINNATI "The playoff meltdown of 2015 and the wide receiver losses in free agency of Marvin Jones and Mohamed Sanu were too much to overcome in what became an injury-riddled, get-this-season-over-with kind of campaign. ... Coach Marvin Lewis and quarterback Andy Dalton get all of the blame for their winless playoff record, but those two are largely responsible for making them consistently competitive. ... Jeremy Hill took a step back in 2016, while Gio Bernard only played in 10 games. ... The fastest man in NFL Combine history, wideout John Ross (4.22), was a surprise top-10 draft pick, but he can force some coverage away from A.J. Green. ... Left tackle Andrew Whitworth grew weary of leading a disinterested team, so he signed with the Rams, and now they have to figure out who will protect Dalton's blindside. ... Center Russell Bodine is very underrated and a rock in the middle of their offensive line. ... Defensive end Carlos Dunlap and defensive tackle Geno Atkins are still playing at a high level, and the Bengals drafted two meat-and-potato prospects in defensive end Jordan Willis and defensive tackle Ryan Glasgow. ... Vontaze Burfict has not played a full season in three years, so Kevin Minter was added at inside linebacker from the Cardinals. ... It's time for Darqueze Dennard to prove himself at corner, especially with Adam Jones always on the edge. ... This team can contend again, but the offensive tackles must protect well and the skill players have to stay injury free. Andy Dalton is an NFL starter, but I'm not convinced he has the moxie and leadership to get Cincinnati beyond the divisional round, if that."

Ross: Craig Mitchelldyer; Atkins: Joe Robbins/Getty Images

BENGALS IN THE *DRAFT*

B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	John Ross	WR	5-11	188	Washington
2.	Joe Mixon	RB	6-1	228	Oklahoma
3.	Jordan Willis	DE	6-4	255	Kansas State
4.	Carl Lawson	DE	6-2	261	Auburn
4.	Josh Malone	WR	6-3	208	Tennessee
4.	Ryan Glasgow	DL	6-3	302	Michigan
5.	Jake Elliott	K	5-9	167	Memphis
5.	J.J. Dielman	OL	6-5	309	Utah
6.	Jordan Evans	LB	6-2	233	Oklahoma
6.	Brandon Wilson	RB	5-11	200	Houston
7.	Mason Schreck	TE	6-5	258	Buffalo

All conversation surrounding this draft class starts with controversial running back Joe Mixon. The Bengals were among a small number of teams even willing to select Mixon, who broke the jaw of Oklahoma student Amelia Molitor in July 2014. Mixon is a first-round talent on the field and will immediately jump into a rotation with Giovani Bernard and Jeremy Hill. There is even a chance Mixon earns the Day 1 start. Elsewhere, speed was the name of the game. John Ross brings an ability to take the top off the defense in the mold of DeSean Jackson, but he also shows polish in his routes underneath. Josh Malone is another talented receiver, though he never put up big numbers at Tennessee. Carl Lawson was an elite recruit who dealt with injuries during his career at Auburn. It was a bit of a surprise he lasted until the fourth round. Jake Elliott will have a chance to win the job as the placekicker.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

TURNING 50 The Bengals will celebrate their 50th season this year with a host of events, including a new logo on the field, special jerseys and a marketing campaign. This seems natural, but it comes as a big step for this organization. The Bengals have always shied away from honoring their past, in particular their former players. They'll take baby steps by refreshing many of the banners hanging in the concourse that haven't been changed since the stadium was built in 2000. They'll also bring back former players for every home game. There is, however, still no Hall of Fame or Ring of Honor.

BENGALS IN THE SNOOP-A-LOOP When Cincinnati selected receiver John Ross at No. 9 overall they added yet another connection to rapper Snoop Dogg. Ross played in Snoop's youth football league as a kid in Long Beach, Calif., and is the first from that league to make it to the NFL. Ross was good friends with Snoop's son, who was also a top receiver recruit. When Ross was drafted, Snoop sent Ross a special video message congratulating him on the selection. Ironically, that message came when Snoop was in Cincinnati visiting his friend Adam Jones. When Snoop comes to Cincinnati, Jones can be seen on stage at almost every one of the rapper's shows. Now, the team has another connection to the legendary performer.

STILL HERE Trade rumors circulated around AJ McCarron for the past two offseasons. He rates as one of the better backup quarterbacks in the league after nearly leading the Bengals to a playoff victory against Pittsburgh two years ago. Upon cleaning out his locker last season, McCarron even said a series of goodbyes not knowing if he'd back. Well, he will return for his fourth season with the team.

SILENT BUT DEADLY Over the past two seasons, defensive tackle Geno Atkins has more Pro Bowl berths than words spoken to the media. Atkins has wrecked game plans for offensive coordinators with 20 sacks the past two seasons. He's proven even more difficult to corral for an interview. A quiet guy by nature, Atkins opts not to speak to the press partially out of superstition — the last time he talked to the media was on Halloween in 2013, and he tore his ACL in the next game.

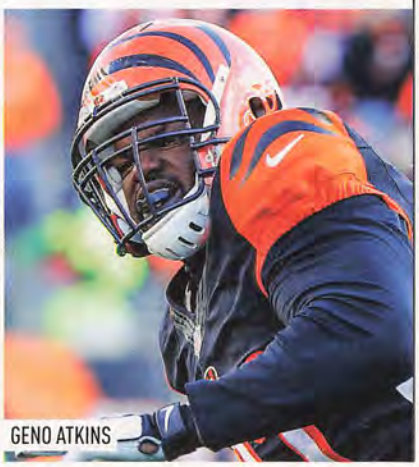
DALTON DISTRIBUTES Andy Dalton has turned into an incredible philanthropist during his tenure in Cincinnati. The Andy and Jordan Dalton Foundation provides support for seriously ill children and their parents in both Cincinnati and Dalton's college town of Fort Worth. Events such as the celebrity waiter night and parent date night not only give financial help to families in need of assistance, but also offer opportunities to help with a reprieve from daily stresses for parents as well. With this foundation as the centerpiece, Dalton was nominated as the Bengals' representative for the Walter Payton Man of the Year Award.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

5.7 The Bengals defense allowed a league-low 5.7 passes and 47.6 yards per game to the opponents' No. 1 receivers.

12.7 The defense had tackles broken on a league-worst 12.7 percent of defensive snaps.

13.2 Only four running backs in the NFL with 200 or more carries broke a lower percentage of tackles per touch (13.2 percent) than Jeremy Hill.



GENO ATKINS

CLEVELAND BROWNS

AFC NORTH FORECAST

4

The Browns bottomed out last season, going 1–15 and again failing to answer their lingering quarterback question. But the case could be made that the team's 2016 teardown was a necessary step. Also, it's difficult to be much worse in any area than the Browns were last season, so they head to 2017 with at least some optimism and a roster that has a chance to be much improved.

How many games this year's edition can actually win is probably dependent on the quarterback situation, and having six different players take snaps last season certainly didn't help matters. The Browns hired Hue Jackson as head coach in 2016 hoping he would help select and develop a quarterback, and the Browns drafted DeShone Kizer in the second round to become their newest project. Robert Griffin III was released after getting hurt and never inspiring much confidence last season, leaving 2016 third-round pick Cody Kessler atop the depth chart headed into a training camp quarterback competition.

OFFENSE The Browns invested heavily in their offensive line, signing Kevin Zeitler and JC Tretter in free agency and giving Joel Bitonio a long-term extension. Pro Bowl left tackle Joe Thomas remains the anchor, and only the right tackle spot remains unsettled. The Browns went through last season without ever developing a real area of strength, and the investment in the offensive line is designed to make sure that doesn't happen again.

A stronger offensive line and commitment to the run game should help the quarterback play, too. The spring pecking order was Kessler, Brock Osweiler and then Kizer, but that could change if Kessler falters or Kizer progresses quickly. Osweiler also could end up being the starter; a year after the Texans outbid the Broncos to get him, they gave up a second-round pick to the Browns to take him and the remaining $16 million in guaranteed money on his contract off their hands. Osweiler is just 26 and has made 21 career starts, so he shouldn't be totally dismissed.

Isaiah Crowell is the lead running back, and he'll have a chance to build on an impressive 2016. Crowell is a powerful runner who showed improved speed and vision last season, and in doing so he separated himself from Duke Johnson, who was probably the favorite to become the starting running back last summer. Johnson remains a valuable third-down back and can contribute for a Browns team that needs playmakers.

That need makes it puzzling that the Browns let Terrelle Pryor walk in free agency last March. Pryor went over 1,000 yards receiving last season in his first full season as a wide receiver, and his size/speed combo made him a difficult matchup for many cornerbacks. The Browns signed veteran Kenny Britt to fill Pryor's spot in the depth chart. More than anything, though, the receivers and the offense as a whole need 2016 first-round pick Corey Coleman to take a significant leap. Coleman had one big game as a rookie and showed he could become a deep threat, but missing time both in training camp and during the season slowed his overall development. The Browns hope this season that he can be a downfield threat and that Britt can help move the chains while both Coleman and first-round tight end David Njoku continue to progress and eventually become top passing-game options. As for who will be throwing the passes come November and December, stay tuned.

DEFENSE The Browns fired defensive coordinator Ray Horton and some of his assistants, bringing in veteran Gregg Williams to take control. With a coordinator change comes a scheme change, but the Browns needed the switch and were going to add a bunch of new players to the defense even before the coaching change.

The first two draft picks were used on defense. Myles Garrett has some of the same gifts the NFL's elite pass rushers have, and he is just 21. Jabrill Peppers will be listed as a strong safety; he played linebacker in his

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER: Jimmy Haslam
EXECUTIVE VP, FOOTBALL OPERATIONS: Sashi Brown
CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER: Paul DePodesta
VICE PRESIDENT OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Andrew Berry
VICE PRESIDENT OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Ken Hovash
STADIUM: FirstEnergy Stadium (67,895)
SURFACE: Kentucky Bluegrass
WEBSITE: www.clevelandbrowns.com
TICKETS: 440-824-3434
TRAINING CAMP: Cleveland Browns Training Facility (Berea, Ohio)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Hue Jackson
RECORD WITH TEAM: 1–15
CAREER RECORD: 9–23
SR. OFFENSIVE ASSISTANT/WIDE RECEIVERS: Al Saunders
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Gregg Williams
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Chris Tabor
RUNNING BACKS: Kirby Wilson
TIGHT ENDS: Greg Seamon
OFFENSIVE LINE: Bob Wylie
DEFENSIVE LINE: Clyde Simmons
LINEBACKERS: Blake Williams
DEFENSIVE BACKS: DeWayne Walker

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	Pittsburgh	1:00	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Sept. 17	at Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Sept. 24	at Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Oct. 1	Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Oct. 8	N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Oct. 15	at Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Oct. 22	Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Oct. 29	vs. Minnesota (London)	9:30 am	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
BYE							
Nov. 12	at Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Nov. 19	Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Nov. 26	at Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Dec. 3	at L.A. Chargers	4:05	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Dec. 10	Green Bay	1:00	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Dec. 17	Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Dec. 24	at Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Dec. 31	at Pittsburgh	1:00	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)

Peter Brouillet

OT JOE THOMAS

2016 RESULTS (1-15)

Sept. 11	at Philadelphia	L	10-29
Sept. 18	Baltimore	L	20-25
Sept. 25	at Miami	L	24-30
Oct. 2	at Washington	L	20-31
Oct. 9	New England	L	13-33
Oct. 16	at Tennessee	L	26-28
Oct. 23	at Cincinnati	L	17-31
Oct. 30	N.Y. Jets	L	28-31
Nov. 6	Dallas	L	10-35
Nov. 10	at Baltimore	L	7-28
Nov. 20	Pittsburgh	L	9-24
Nov. 27	N.Y. Giants	L	13-27
Dec. 11	Cincinnati	L	10-23
Dec. 18	at Buffalo	L	13-33
Dec. 24	L.A. Chargers	W	20-17
Jan. 1	at Pittsburgh (ot)	L	24-27

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Cody Kessler	195	128	1,380	6	2
Josh McCown	165	90	1,100	6	6
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Isaiah Crowell	198	952	4.8	7	
Duke Johnson	73	358	4.9	1	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Terrelle Pryor	77	1,007	13.1	4	
Gary Barnidge	55	612	11.1	2	
Duke Johnson	53	514	9.7	0	
Isaiah Crowell	40	319	8.0	0	
Corey Coleman	33	413	12.5	3	
Andrew Hawkins	33	324	9.8	3	

KICKING: Cody Parkey, 20-25 FGs, 20-21 PAT, 80 points
TACKLES: Christian Kirksey, 148; Demario Davis, 99
SACKS: Emmanuel Ogbah, 5.5; Cam Johnson, 3.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Three players tied with 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	311.0	30	16
Rushing	107.0	19	11
Passing	204.0	28	14
Scoring	16.5	31	16
Third Down %	36.3	26	13
Punt Returns	6.7	26	12
Kick Returns	18.6	T28	T14

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	392.4	31	16
Rushing	142.7	31	16
Passing	249.8	21	13
Scoring	28.2	30	16
Interceptions	10	T23	13
Sacks	26	T30	15
Turnover Differential	-12	29	14

ISAIAH CROWELL

final college season and can also play nickel cornerback. Both Garrett and Peppers will have to deal with a learning curve, but both bring much-needed athleticism to the defense.

Keeping linebacker Jamie Collins was another offseason priority. The Browns hope a new contract for linebacker Christian Kirskey is next, and they envision Collins and Kirskey combining with Garrett, third-year man Danny Shelton and second-year pro Emmanuel Ogbah to improve the run defense. It remains to be seen if a forward-thinking front office keeps veterans such as defensive end Desmond Bryant and linebacker DeMario Davis on the roster past training camp.

The secondary needs cornerback Joe Haden to play at a high level, and Haden has made his annual offseason vow that he's healthy and ready for a rebound. Jamar Taylor revived his career last season, got a new contract and should start opposite Haden, while Peppers and second-year man Derrick Kindred are the likely starters at safety. The Browns are thin and inexperienced in the secondary, and that group would benefit most if the team could improve its run defense.

The defensive line will probably be most affected by the scheme change and the draft picks. Ideally, Garrett and Ogbah will be the starters at defensive end with Shelton and third-round rookie Larry Ogunjobi heading up the rotation of inside players. Williams hasn't committed to a single scheme despite being a 4-3 base defensive coach for most of his career. The Browns will play a lot of nickel defense and hope versatile players such as Peppers, Ogbah and Collins can move around and keep offenses guessing.

SPECIALISTS The Browns spent in the offseason to keep punter Britton Colquitt and to lock up Charley Hughlett with an extension that makes him the league's highest-paid long snapper. Colquitt was brought on last summer after the Browns traded veteran Andy Lee to Carolina for a fourth-round pick.

There will be a training camp kicking competition after the Browns drafted Zane Gonzalez in the seventh round. Cody Parkey finished strong last season after a nightmarish start that included two misses on what could have been game-winning field goals in an early season game at Miami. Parkey had been an emergency replacement for Patrick Murray after Murray suffered a major knee injury during a walkthrough.

Peppers will get a shot to be the punt returner, even if he ends up sharing the job. The Browns added Gonzalez because of his talent and penchant for kicking touchbacks as a college player, but also as insurance after what happened last season. The Browns ended up going with a punter, kicker and return men last season who weren't atop the depth chart — or even on it — heading into training camp last summer.

FINAL ANALYSIS The roster is improved. Whether that can translate into enough wins to climb out of the AFC North basement remains unknown — and unlikely. The Browns still figure to struggle to score enough points and get enough stops to keep up with the league's better teams.

Internal expectations seem realistic, and the Browns will again be judging the progress of their rookies and hoping they come out of the 2017 with more building-block players than they've had in several seasons. By spending big on the offensive line in free agency and then focusing on defense early in the draft, the Browns hope to keep their quarterbacks healthy and let those young defensive players grow into prominent roles.

Yes, the Browns are playing for the future. They seem to be pretty well positioned for the future, too. But 2017 remains crucial for several reasons, most notably because no head coach has made it to a third season under owner Jimmy Haslam and because the Browns won't climb out of the division basement until they get much-improved play at quarterback.

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN BROWNS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
8 Hogan, Kevin	QB	6-3	218	1	Stanford	FA-16	D5-KC-16
6 Kessler, Cody	QB	6-1	215	1	USC	D3c-16	D3c-Cle-16
17 Osweiler, Brock	QB	6-8	235	5	Arizona State	T-Hou-17	D2-Den-12
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
25 Atkinson III, George	RB	6-1	220	1	Notre Dame	W-Oak-16	FA-Oak-14
34 Crowell, Isaiah	RB	5-11	225	3	Alabama State	FA-14	FA-Cle-14
35 Jackson, Darius	RB	6-0	220	1	Eastern Michigan	W-Dal-16	D6-Dal-16
29 Johnson, Duke	RB	5-9	210	2	Miami-Fla	D3a-15	D3a-Cle-15
40 Vitale, Dan	FB	6-1	239	1	Northwestern	FA-16	D6-TB-16
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
15 Alford, Mario	WR	5-8	177	2	West Virginia	FA-16	D7-Cin-15
18 Britt, Kenny	WR	6-3	223	8	Rutgers	FA-LAR-17	D1-Ten-09
83 Boyce, Josh	WR	5-11	205	2	TCU	FA-16	D4-NE-13
19 Coleman, Corey	WR	5-11	185	1	Baylor	D1-16	D1-Cle-16
87 DeValve, Seth	TE	6-3	245	1	Princeton	D4d-16	D4d-Cle-16
12 Gordon, Josh	WR	6-3	225	3	Baylor	SD2-12	SD2-Cle-12
85 Hall, Rannell	WR	6-0	200	1	UCF	FA-15	FA-TB-15
89 Hamlett, Connor	TE	6-7	259	1	Oregon State	FA-16	FA-Jac-15
81 Higgins, Rashard	WR	6-1	198	1	Colorado State	D5c-16	D5c-Cle-16
49 Holtz, J.P.	TE	6-3	240	1	Pittsburgh	FA-16	FA-Cle-16
17 Leslie, Jordan	WR	6-1	205	1	BYU	FA-16	FA-Min-15
80 Louis, Ricardo	WR	6-2	215	1	Auburn	D4b-16	D4b-Cle-16
84 Payton, Jordan	WR	6-1	209	1	UCLA	D5a-16	D5a-Cle-16
86 Telfer, Randall	TE	6-4	250	1	USC	D6c-15	D6c-Cle-15
13 Wright, James	WR	6-1	201	3	LSU	FA-Cin-17	D7a-Cin-14
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
75 Bitonio, Joel	OL	6-4	305	3	Nevada	D2-14	D2-Cle-14
72 Coleman, Shon	OL	6-7	310	1	Auburn	D3b-16	D3b-Cle-16
66 Drango, Spencer	OL	6-6	315	1	Baylor	D5b-16	D5b-Cle-16
74 Erving, Cameron	OL	6-5	313	2	Florida State	D1b-15	D1b-Cle-15
61 Fabiano, Anthony	OL	6-1	303	1	Harvard	FA-16	FA-Bal-16
77 Greco, John	OL	6-4	318	9	Toledo	T-LAR-11	D3-LAR-08
60 Ikard, Gabe	OL	6-4	300	3	Oklahoma	W-Buf-16	FA-Ten-14
63 Martin, Marcus	C	6-3	321	3	USC	W-SF-17	D3a-SF-14
71 McCants, Matt	OL	6-6	310	4	UAB	FA-Chi-17	D6-NYG-12
62 Reiter, Austin	OL	6-2	300	1	South Florida	FA-16	D7-Was-15
79 Sterup, Zach	OL	6-9	318	1	Nebraska	FA-16	FA-KC-16
73 Thomas, Joe	OL	6-6	312	10	Wisconsin	D1a-07	D1a-Cle-07
64 Tretter, JC	OL	6-4	307	4	Cornell	FA-GB-17	D4b-GB-13
70 Zeitler, Kevin	OL	6-4	320	5	Wisconsin	FA-Cin-17	D1b-Cin-12
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
92 Bryant, Desmond	DL	6-6	310	8	Harvard	FA-Oak-13	FA-Oak-09
93 Coley, Trevon	DL	6-1	310	1	Florida Atlantic	FA-16	FA-Bal-16
96 Cooper, Xavier	DL	6-4	300	2	Washington State	D3b-15	D3b-Cle-15
91 Holmes, Tyrone	DL	6-2	253	1	Montana	W-Jac-16	D6-Jac-16
70 Lawrence-Stample, Nile	DL	6-1	320	1	Florida State	FA-16	FA-Cle-16
98 Meder, Jamie	DL	6-3	308	2	Ashland	FA-14	FA-Bal-14
94 Nassib, Carl	DL	6-7	275	1	Penn State	D3a-16	D3a-Cle-16
90 Ogbah, Emmanuel	DL	6-4	275	1	Oklahoma State	D2-16	D2-Cle-16
55 Shelton, Danny	DL	6-2	335	2	Washington	D1a-15	D1a-Cle-15
97 Wright, Gabe	DL	6-2	284	2	Auburn	FA-16	D4-Det-15
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
54 Alexander, Dominique	LB	6-0	235	1	Oklahoma	FA-16	FA-Cle-16
52 Burgess, James	LB	6-0	230	1	Louisville	FA-16	FA-Mia-16
59 Carder, Tank	LB	6-2	235	5	TCU	W-Buf-12	D5-Buf-12
51 Collins Sr., Jamie	LB	6-3	250	4	Southern Miss	T-NE-16	D2-NE-13
56 Davis, Demario	LB	6-2	248	5	Arkansas State	FA-NYJ-16	D3-NYJ-12
57 Johnson, Cam	LB	6-4	268	3	Virginia	FA-16	D7-SF-12
58 Kirksey, Christian	LB	6-2	235	3	Iowa	D3a-14	D3a-Cle-14
44 Orchard, Nate	LB	6-4	255	2	Utah	D2-15	D2-Cle-15
53 Schobert, Joe	LB	6-1	245	1	Wisconsin	D4a-16	D4a-Cle-16
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
20 Boddy-Calhoun, Briean	DB	5-9	193	1	Minnesota	W-Jac-16	FA-Jac-16
26 Burley, Marcus	DB	5-10	190	3	Delaware	W-Sea-16	FA-Jac-13
31 Caldwell, Trey	DB	5-9	185	1	UL Monroe	D5d-16	D5d-Cle-16
24 Campbell, Ibraheim	DB	5-11	208	2	Northwestern	D4a-15	D4a-Cle-15
36 Currie, Justin	DB	6-2	212	1	Western Michigan	FA-16	FA-NYG-15
23 Haden, Joe	DB	5-11	195	7	Florida	D1-10	D1-Cle-10
28 Hillary, Darius	DB	5-10	183	1	Wisconsin	FA-16	FA-Cin-16
30 Kindred, Derrick	DB	5-10	210	1	TCU	D4c-16	D4c-Cle-16
22 Powell, Tyvis	DB	6-2	211	1	Ohio State	W-Sea-17	FA-Sea-16
39 Reynolds II, Ed	DB	6-1	207	2	Stanford	FA-16	D5-Phi-14
27 Taylor, Jamar	DB	5-11	192	4	Boise State	T-Mia-16	D2-Mia-13
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
4 Colquitt, Britton	P	6-2	205	7	Tennessee	FA-16	FA-Den-09
47 Hughlett, Charley	LS	6-4	248	2	Central Florida	FA-14	FA-Dal-12
3 Parkey, Cody	K	6-0	190	3	Auburn	FA-16	FA-Ind-14

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	19	Corey Coleman	81	Rashard Higgins
WR	18	Kenny Britt	80	Ricardo Louis
LT	73	Joe Thomas	78	Roderick Johnson (R)
LG	75	Joel Bitonio	66	Spencer Drango
C	64	JC Tretter	63	Marcus Martin
RG	70	Kevin Zeitler	75	Joel Bitonio
RT	72	Shon Coleman	74	Cameron Erving
TE	85	David Njoku (R)	87	Seth DeValve
QB	6	Cody Kessler	17	Brock Osweiler
FB	40	Dan Vitale	86	Randall Telfer
RB	34	Isaiah Crowell	29	Duke Johnson

DEFENSE

DE	90	Emmanuel Ogbah	94	Carl Nassib
DT	55	Danny Shelton	65	Larry Ogunjobi (R)
DT	96	Xavier Cooper	97	Gabe Wright
DE	97	Myles Garrett (R)	92	Desmond Bryant
OLB	51	Jamie Collins	44	Nate Orchard
MLB	58	Christian Kirksey	56	DeMario Davis
OLB	53	Joe Schobert	54	Dominique Alexander
CB	23	Joe Haden	35	Howard Wilson (R)
CB	21	Jamar Taylor	20	Briean Boddy-Calhoun
S	27	Jabrill Peppers (R)	24	Ibraheim Campbell
S	30	Derrick Kindred	39	Ed Reynolds

SPECIALISTS

K	3	Cody Parkey	KR	29	Duke Johnson
P	4	Britton Colquitt	PR	27	Jabrill Peppers (R)

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
WR	Kenny Britt	L.A. Rams
C	Marcus Martin	San Francisco
S	Tyvis Powell	Seattle
C	JC Tretter	Green Bay
WR	James Wright	Cincinnati
OG	Kevin Zeitler	Cincinnati

KEY LOSSES −

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
OL	Alvin Bailey	Free Agent
TE	Gary Barnidge	Free Agent
WR	Andrew Hawkins	Free Agent
QB	Josh McCown	N.Y. Jets
OT	Austin Pasztor	Free Agent
WR	Terrelle Pryor	Washington
CB	Tramon Williams	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE BROWNS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP CLEVELAND "People inside the league continue to roll their eyes at the current leadership in Cleveland because their 'analytics' have not produced any consistency in player acquisition. ... Last year, Robert Griffin III was the hand-picked reclamation project for Hue Jackson. Then, they 'bought' Brock Osweiler and his $16M contract for a 2018 second-round draft pick. ... Now, it appears that Cody Kessler, a 2016 third-round pick, will battle this year's second-round choice, DeShone Kizer, for the quarterback job. ... Running back Isaiah Crowell is capable, but he doesn't demand an eight-man front. ... The offensive line should be a strength with guard Kevin Zeitler (Bengals) and center J.C. Tretter (Packers) being added in free agency. ... Joel Bitonio was extended and will continue playing alongside ironman All-Pro Joe Thomas. ... Danny Shelton is not dynamic but must impact their run defense more. ... New defensive coordinator Gregg Williams' style is associated more with creating pressure and turnovers than controlling field position. ... They wisely took defensive end Myles Garrett No. 1 overall, but many question whether his potential can turn into actual production. ... Linebacker Jamie Collins was traded for and then extended, so he is part of the long-term plan, while corner Joe Haden has been sub-standard for two years. ... Look for rookie Jabrill Peppers to end up in a '46' kind of strong safety role in this scheme. ... In analyzing their schedule, it's hard to find more than four wins, so the question will be if Jimmy Haslam allows this regime to continue or will he pull the plug on this grand experiment?"

BROWNS IN THE *DRAFT* A

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Myles Garrett	DE	6-4	272	Texas A&M
1.	Jabrill Peppers	S	5-11	213	Michigan
1.	David Njoku	TE	6-4	246	Miami (Fla.)
2.	DeShone Kizer	QB	6-4	233	Notre Dame
3.	Larry Ogunjobi	DT	6-3	305	Charlotte
4.	Howard Wilson	CB	6-1	184	Houston
5.	Roderick Johnson	OT	6-7	298	Florida State
6.	Caleb Brantley	DT	6-3	307	Florida
7.	Zane Gonzalez	K	6-0	202	Arizona State
7.	Matthew Dayes	RB	5-9	205	NC State

The Browns used the No. 1 overall pick on Myles Garrett and hope he'll eventually become a top-tier pass rusher. Jabrill Peppers will start as a strong safety but could eventually be a linebacker hybrid and also might return punts. David Njoku is just 20 but figures as an immediate starter with Gary Barnidge having been released. The Browns believe they drafted better than they did in this regime's first attempt a year ago, and if DeShone Kizer becomes the long-term quarterback, this draft will be deemed a success. Garrett, Peppers and Njoku will be immediate contributors even if they aren't listed as starters, and the Browns hope to find at least one gem and eventual contributor from the players they picked over the final four rounds. Roderick Johnson, a fifth-rounder from Florida State, could be the eventual replacement at left tackle for Joe Thomas but might first compete at other positions.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

ON THE VERGE? Running back Isaiah Crowell is coming off his best season, and the Browns hope a beefed-up offensive line will help Crowell be even better this season. Crowell had a career-long 85-yard touchdown run last season and set career highs in yardage, yards per carry and receptions last season. Unless Crowell and the team reach an agreement on a new deal, he's eligible for unrestricted free agency following the 2017 season.

NEW FACES If all goes according to plan, Joe Thomas will be the only player who started last year's season finale on the offensive line to start this year's season opener. The Browns signed JC Tretter and Kevin Zeitler in free agency to play center and right guard, respectively. Left guard Joel Bitonio got a megabucks extension despite coming off foot surgery, and last year's right tackle, Austin Pasztor, is no longer with the team.

OUTLIERS Thomas and Zeitler are two of 10 former first-round picks on the roster, and that includes the three players the Browns picked in the first round this year. The Browns had multiple first-round picks in 2012, '14, '15 and '17. Justin Gilbert and Johnny Manziel, 2014 first-round picks, were both off the Browns' roster before the start of last season, and both are currently out of the league.

LOCKED UP The Browns drafted 14 players in 2016 and drafted 10 players in this year's draft. Via nine total trades in those two drafts, they hold two first-round picks, three second-round picks, two fourth-round picks and two sixth-round picks in the 2018 draft.

REVOLVING DOOR Regardless of which quarterback starts the season opener, he'll become the fifth different starting QB in the last five openers and the 10th different starting quarterback in the last 11 seasons. In the team's new era, only Brandon Weeden (2012-13), Charlie Frye (2006-07) and Tim Couch (2000-01) have started consecutive openers.

LIFE COMES AT YOU FAST New quarterback Brock Osweiler signed a four-year, $72 million deal with the Texans before 2016. The Texans won the AFC South and won a playoff game, but Osweiler was benched late in the season and generally was awful. He was essentially sold to the Browns with a second-round pick in March, and he became a father for the first time just before reporting for the team's offseason program last April.

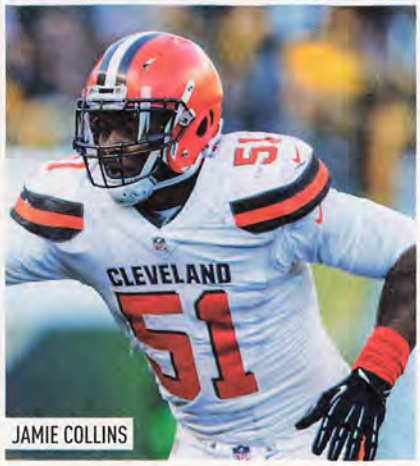
HE'S FIRST Rookie defensive tackle Larry Ogunjobi, a third-round pick, became the first player from Charlotte (the college, not the city) ever drafted. He signed with the program before it ever played a game, practiced with what there was of a team in 2012, then started the first-ever game for the school in 2013. Ogunjobi was a 350-pound teenager when his parents forced him off of his video game system and into football, and he lost more than 100 pounds in the first year he played the game.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

10.6 The Browns finished last in the NFL in Adjusted Sack Rate, allowing 10.6 percent of their pass snaps to become sacks.

37:08 The Browns spent an average of 37:08 per game trailing, worst in the NFL.

23.4 Cleveland had the worst average starting field position after kickoffs in the league, averaging a start at the 23.4-yard line.



JAMIE COLLINS

Garrett: Paul Abell; Collins: Frank Jansky/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

AFC NORTH FORECAST

1

The Steelers have been to more Super Bowls than almost any other team in the NFL. The standard for greatness in Pittsburgh, needless to say, is high.

So is it fair to use the term "drought" when it comes to the Steelers and their ultimate postseason destination of choice? Perhaps it's a bit harsh, but the Steelers are now six seasons removed from their last AFC Championship and eight removed from their last Super Bowl victory.

Two of the main players from that momentous night in Tampa, quarterback Ben Roethlisberger and linebacker James Harrison, remain key members of a 2017 Steelers team that is determined to get back to the Super Bowl. The players around them now are almost completely different, but each side of the ball boasts a group that has grown together and is hitting its prime at the right time to help their elder veterans get another shot at the game's top prize.

OFFENSE The Steelers have arguably the best running back in football with Le'Veon Bell, the best wide receiver with Antonio Brown, plenty of supplementary playmakers and a solid offensive line, but they'll only go as far as Roethlisberger is able to carry them. The past two years have been tough on the 35-year-old veteran, who missed stretches of 2015 and 2016 with various injuries. Though most assumed he'd be back for his 14th season, Roethlisberger waited until early April to make it official. Clearly, he's on the back end of a Hall of Fame career, but he's still one of the best quarterbacks in the league, completely healthy or not. The Steelers are 28–13 with Roethlisberger under center over the past three seasons — a stretch that has seen him post three of his four highest passing yards-per-game averages.

Roethlisberger is the driving force behind an offense that should be nothing short of a top-five unit in 2017. A player of Bell's caliber is poised for another big season after averaging more than 100 rushing yards and 50 receiving yards in 2016, a suspension-shortened campaign that was so dazzling that some dubbed him an MVP candidate. Entering his fifth season, Bell is in the heart of his prime and will have no shortage of motivation while playing on the franchise tag. His security blanket of the past two seasons, veteran DeAngelo Williams, is no longer with the Steelers, but rookie James Conner is expected to provide short-yardage thump that should nicely complement Bell's patient running style.

The Steelers did just fine through the air last season without Martavis Bryant, who was suspended from start to finish. Now with Bryant back in the fold, the Steelers present one of the league's most dangerous one-two punches at wide receiver. Bryant's blazing speed and ability to take the top off the defense not only makes him a dangerous deep threat, but also opens up the field for Brown, who has been the constant target of double-teams and bracket coverage over the past few seasons. And if Bryant can't stay on the straight and narrow, the Steelers are prepared. On top of returning receivers Eli Rogers and Darrius Heyward-Bey, Pittsburgh added the well-traveled Justin Hunter in free agency and used a second-round pick on USC's JuJu Smith-Schuster, who could make an immediate impact in the slot.

A healthy Ladarius Green could add even more intrigue to Pittsburgh's passing attack, as the former Chargers tight end missed most of 2016 with injuries but provided a spark in the games in which he was available.

The Steelers didn't add a single player to their offensive line through the draft for the third time in five years in large part because the unit returns completely intact and is one of the league's most reliable. The group is strongest up the middle, where it features two Pro Bowlers, center Maurkice Pouncey and right guard David DeCastro. Entering his third season at the left tackle position, Alejandro Villanueva continues to ascend, while left guard Ramon Foster and right tackle Marcus Gilbert round out a unit that helps bring the best out of the team's dynamic playmakers.

THE ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN: Daniel M. Rooney
PRESIDENT: Arthur J. Rooney II
VICE PRESIDENT: Arthur J. Rooney Jr.
GENERAL MANAGER: Kevin Colbert
STADIUM: Heinz Field (68,400)
SURFACE: Kentucky Bluegrass
WEBSITE: www.steelers.com
TICKETS: 412-323-1200
TRAINING CAMP: Saint Vincent College (Latrobe, Pa.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Mike Tomlin
RECORD WITH TEAM: 103–57
CAREER RECORD: 103–57
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Todd Haley
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Keith Butler
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Danny Smith
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/DEFENSIVE LINE: John Mitchell
QUARTERBACKS: Randy Fichtner
RUNNING BACKS: James Saxon
WIDE RECEIVERS: Richard Mann
TIGHT ENDS: James Daniel
OFFENSIVE LINE: Mike Munchak
INSIDE LINEBACKERS: Jerry Olsavsky
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS: Joey Porter
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Carnell Lake

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	at Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Sept. 17	Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Sept. 24	at Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Oct. 1	at Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Oct. 8	Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Oct. 15	at Kansas City	4:25	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Oct. 22	Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Oct. 29	at Detroit	8:30	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
BYE							
Nov. 12	at Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Nov. 16	Tennessee (Thu.)	8:25	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Nov. 26	Green Bay	8:30	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Dec. 4	at Cincinnati (Mon.)	8:30	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Dec. 10	Baltimore	8:30	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Dec. 17	New England	4:25	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Dec. 25	at Houston (Mon.)	4:30	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Dec. 31	Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)

RB LE'VEON BELL

2016 RESULTS (11-5)

Sept. 12	at Washington	W	38-16
Sept. 18	Cincinnati	W	24-16
Sept. 25	at Philadelphia	L	3-34
Oct. 2	Kansas City	W	43-14
Oct. 9	N.Y. Jets	W	31-13
Oct. 16	at Miami	L	15-30
Oct. 23	New England	L	16-27
Nov. 6	at Baltimore	L	14-21
Nov. 13	Dallas	L	30-35
Nov. 20	at Cleveland	W	24-9
Nov. 24	at Indianapolis	W	28-7
Dec. 4	N.Y. Giants	W	24-14
Dec. 11	at Buffalo	W	27-20
Dec. 18	at Cincinnati	W	24-20
Dec. 25	Baltimore	W	31-27
Jan. 1	Cleveland (ot)	W	27-24
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 8	Miami	W	30-12
Jan. 15	at Kansas City	W	18-16
Jan. 22	at New England	L	17-36

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Ben Roethlisberger	509	328	3,819	29	13
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Le'Veon Bell	261	1,268	4.9	7	
DeAngelo Williams	98	343	3.5	4	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Antonio Brown	106	1,284	12.1	12	
Le'Veon Bell	75	616	8.2	2	
Eli Rogers	48	594	12.4	3	
Jesse James	39	338	8.7	3	
Sammie Coates	21	435	20.7	2	
DeAngelo Williams	18	118	6.6	2	
Ladarius Green	18	304	16.9	1	

KICKING: Chris Boswell, 21-25 FGs, 36-36 PAT, 99 points
TACKLES: Lawrence Timmons, 114; Ryan Shazier, 87
SACKS: James Harrison, 5.0; Bud Dupree, 4.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Ryan Shazier, 3; Artie Burns, 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	372.6	7	3
Rushing	110.0	14	9
Passing	262.6	T5	T2
Scoring	24.9	T10	T5
Third Down %	41.1	12	5
Punt Returns	8.4	16	7
Kick Returns	21.5	17	9

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	342.6	12	7
Rushing	100.0	13	6
Passing	242.6	16	9
Scoring	20.4	10	6
Interceptions	13	T15	T8
Sacks	38	T9	4
Turnover Differential	+5	T9	T5

BEN ROETHLISBERGER

W. E. Smith III

DEFENSE The glory days of The Steel Curtain are in the past. The Steelers of this era simply need a defense that can hold off opponents enough to let their high-powered offense go to work and build multiple-possession leads. They certainly have the makings of just that, especially if a number of their younger players build off the promising performances they posted in 2016.

Pittsburgh needs to be more consistent against the run. The Steelers regressed from fifth in the NFL in 2015 to 13th last season in rushing defense largely because of some aberration games (222 rushing yards surrendered to Miami, 231 to Cleveland). Pittsburgh went 2–4 in games in which it allowed more than 100 rushing yards.

Some of the ups and downs that the defense suffered through can be attributed to youth and injuries, as Pittsburgh relied heavily on rookie nose tackle Javon Hargrave and rookie Sean Davis at strong safety and played without Cameron Heyward during the second half of the season.

The good news for Pittsburgh is that Heyward will be back at his spot on the end of the defensive line and players such as Hargrave, Davis and up-and-coming pass rusher Bud Dupree will be a year older and better.

Ryan Shazier made his first Pro Bowl in 2016 and is on the path to many more. He'll be the lead dog in the middle of Pittsburgh's defense after the departure of veteran Lawrence Timmons. The Steelers will hope to get an immediate impact from first-round pick T.J. Watt, who essentially fills the spot vacated by 2013 first-round disappointment Jarvis Jones, who signed with Arizona. Watt, Dupree and the ageless Harrison, who will be 39 years young at the start of the season, will be the main men behind a pass rush that ranked tied for ninth in the NFL with 38 sacks in 2016.

A liability at times in 2015, Pittsburgh's secondary showed signs of improvement last season, as rookies Artie Burns and Davis were tasked with major responsibilities right out of the gate. Both are bona fide starters on a unit that also features veterans Ross Cockrell and hard-hitting Mike Mitchell.

The depth on the back end will be supplemented by a mix of old and young with William Gay, rookie Cameron Sutton and the potential return of Senquez Golson, the former second-round pick who has missed the past two seasons with injuries. The Steelers certainly aren't counting on much from Golson, so Sutton, a third-round selection out of Tennessee, should be expected to take on some kind of role as a rookie — just like a number of his counterparts who have grown together and improved with each passing season.

SPECIALISTS The Steelers aren't going to fix what isn't broken at kicker, as Chris Boswell will enter his third season with the job firmly in hand. After going 21-of-25 during the regular season, Boswell proved his worth and then some in the playoffs, connecting on all eight of his attempts, including a whopping six in Pittsburgh's AFC Divisional Round win against the Chiefs. This will be punter Jordan Berry's third season, too, and he's coming off a similarly strong 2016 (45.6 yards per punt). The kick return job could be up for grabs, while Brown and Rogers will return punts.

FINAL ANALYSIS Time might be winding down on Roethlisberger's career, but there's more than enough in the tank for what could be another exciting January in Pittsburgh. When the Steelers are healthy and clicking on offense, there are few, if any, teams that can stop them. With very little turnover from a roster that advanced to the AFC Championship last season, the Steelers are poised to make another run deep into the playoffs and could very well put an end to their Super Bowl "drought."

2017 VETERAN STEELERS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
3 Jones, Landry	QB	6-4	225	4	Oklahoma	D4b-13	D4b-Pit-13
7 Roethlisberger, Ben	QB	6-5	240	13	Miami (OH)	D1-04	D1-Pit-04
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
26 Bell, Le'Veon	RB	6-1	225	4	Michigan State	D2-13	D2-Pit-13
Davis, Knile	RB	5-10	227	4	Arkansas	FA-KC-17	D3b-KC-13
45 Nix, Roosevelt	FB	5-11	248	2	Kent State	FA-15	FA-Atl-14
39 Smith, Dreamius	RB	5-11	225	1	West Virginia	FA-16	FA-LAC-15
33 Toussaint, Fitzgerald	RB	5-9	204	3	Michigan	FA-15	FA-Bal-14
Williams, Trey	RB	5-8	200	1	Texas A&M	FA-17	FA-Was-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
15 Ayers, Demarcus	WR	5-9	190	1	Houston	D7a-16	D7a-Pit-16
84 Brown, Antonio	WR	5-10	181	7	Central Michigan	D6b-10	D6b-Pit-10
10 Bryant, Martavis	WR	6-4	211	3	Clemson	D4-14	D4-Pit-14
14 Coates, Sammie	WR	6-1	212	2	Auburn	D3-15	D3-Pit-15
89 Green, Ladarius	TE	6-6	240	5	UL Lafayette	FA-LAC-16	D4-LAC-12
85 Grimble, Xavier	TE	6-4	261	1	USC	FA-15	FA-NYG-14
83 Hamilton, Cobi	WR	6-2	201	1	Arkansas	FA-16	D6-Cin-13
88 Heyward-Bey, Darrius	WR	6-2	210	8	Maryland	FA-Ind-14	D1-Oak-09
Hunter, Justin	WR	6-4	203	4	Tennessee	FA-Buf-17	D2-Ten-13
81 James, Jesse	TE	6-7	261	2	Penn State	D5-15	D5-Pit-15
82 Johnson, David	TE	6-2	260	8	Arkansas State	FA-16	D7-Pit-09
17 Rogers, Eli	WR	5-10	187	2	Louisville	FA-15	FA-Pit-15
16 Tucker, Marcus	WR	5-10	190	1	Northern Michigan	FA-16	FA-Pit-16
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
66 DeCastro, David	G	6-5	316	5	Stanford	D1-12	D1-Pit-12
71 Feiler, Matt	OL	6-6	330	1	Bloomsburg	FA-16	FA-Hou-14
67 Finney, B.J.	C/G	6-4	318	1	Kansas State	FA-15	FA-Pit-15
73 Foster, Ramon	G	6-5	328	8	Tennessee	FA-09	FA-Pit-09
Friend, Kyle	OL	6-2	305	1	Temple	FA-17	FA-NYJ-16
77 Gilbert, Marcus	T	6-6	330	6	Florida	D2-11	D2-Pit-11
65 Hawkins, Jerald	T	6-6	305	1	LSU	D4-16	D4-Pit-16
74 Hubbard, Chris	G/T	6-4	295	3	UAB	FA-13	FA-Pit-13
Matthews, Mike	OL	6-2	300	1	Texas A&M	FA-17	FA-Cle-16
76 Milton, Keavon	OL	6-4	320	2	UL Monroe	FA-16	FA-NO-13
53 Pouncey, Maurkice	C	6-4	304	7	Florida	D1-10	D1-Pit-10
78 Villanueva, Alejandro	T	6-9	320	2	Army	FA-14	FA-Phi-14
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
Alualu, Tyson	DE	6-3	304	7	California	FA-Jac-17	D1-Jac-10
79 Hargrave, Javon	DT	6-2	305	1	South Carolina St.	D3-16	D3-Pit-16
97 Heyward, Cameron	DE	6-5	295	6	Ohio State	D1-11	D1-Pit-11
65 Hooks, Lavon	DT	6-3	312	1	Ole Miss	FA-17	FA-GB-15
62 Maxey, Johnny	DT	6-5	283	1	Mars Hill	FA-16	FA-Pit-16
93 McCullers, Daniel	DT	6-7	352	3	Tennessee	D6b-14	D6b-Pit-14
69 Philon, Roy	DT	6-3	291	1	Louisville	FA-17	FA-Pit-14
91 Tuitt, Stephon	DE	6-6	303	3	Notre Dame	D2-14	D2-Pit-14
96 Walton, L.T.	DE	6-5	305	2	Central Michigan	D6a-15	D6a-Pit-15
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
Blount, Akil	LB	6-2	249	1	Florida A&M	FA-17	FA-Mia-16
56 Chickillo, Anthony	LB	6-3	255	2	Miami	D6b-15	D6b-Pit-15
48 Dupree, Bud	LB	6-4	269	2	Kentucky	D1-15	D1-Pit-15
Fanaika, Jason	LB	6-3	270	1	Utah	FA-17	FA-SF-16
54 Fort, L.J.	LB	6-0	232	2	Northern Iowa	FA-15	FA-Cle-12
92 Harrison, James	LB	6-0	242	14	Kent State	FA-14	FA-Pit-02
Huguenin, Farrington	LB	6-4	268	1	Kentucky	FA-17	FA-Mia-16
51 Johnson, Steven	LB	6-1	237	5	Kansas	FA-Ten-16	FA-Den-12
44 Matakevich, Tyler	LB	6-1	235	1	Temple	D7b-16	D7b-Pit-16
55 Moats, Arthur	LB	6-0	246	7	James Madison	FA-Buf-14	D6a-Buf-10
50 Shazier, Ryan	LB	6-1	230	3	Ohio State	D1-14	D1-Pit-14
98 Williams, Vince	LB	6-1	233	4	Florida State	D6b-13	D6b-Pit-13
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
25 Burns, Artie	CB	6-0	197	1	Miami	D1-16	D1-Pit-16
31 Cockrell, Ross	CB	6-0	191	3	Duke	FA-15	D4-Buf-14
37 Dangerfield, Jordan	S	5-11	199	1	Towson	FA-15	FA-Buf-13
28 Davis, Sean	S	6-1	202	1	Maryland	D2-16	D2-Pit-16
35 Dixon, Brandon	CB	5-11	203	2	NW Missouri St.	FA-16	D6-NYJ-14
Ducre, Greg	CB	5-10	183	2	Washington	FA-17	FA-LAC-14
22 Gay, William	CB	5-10	187	10	Louisville	FA-13	D5b-Pit-07
21 Golden, Robert	S	5-11	202	5	Arizona	FA-12	FA-Pit-12
27 Golson, Senquez	CB	5-9	176	2	Ole Miss	D2-15	D2-Pit-15
42 Hagen, Jacob	S	6-3	205	1	Liberty	FA-16	FA-LAR-15
40 Hilton, Mike	CB	5-9	184	1	Ole Miss	FA-16	FA-Jac-16
Johnson, Devonte	CB	6-0	180	1	Weber State	FA-17	FA-Atl-16
23 Mitchell, Mike	S	6-1	221	8	Ohio	FA-Car-14	D2-Oak-09
Sensabaugh, Coty	CB	5-11	187	5	Clemson	FA-NYG-17	D4-Ten-12
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
4 Berry, Jordan	P	6-5	195	2	Eastern Kentucky	FA-15	FA-Pit-15
9 Boswell, Chris	K	6-2	185	2	Rice	FA-15	FA-Hou-14
60 Warren, Greg	LS	6-3	252	12	North Carolina	FA-05	FA-Pit-05

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	84	Antonio Brown		Justin Hunter
WR	10	Martavis Bryant	88	Darrius Heyward-Bey
WR	17	Eli Rogers		JuJu Smith-Schuster (R)
LT	78	Alejandro Villanueva	74	Chris Hubbard
LG	73	Ramon Foster	67	B.J. Finney
C	53	Maurkice Pouncey	67	B.J. Finney
RG	66	David DeCastro	67	B.J. Finney
RT	77	Marcus Gilbert	74	Chris Hubbard
TE	81	Jesse James	89	Ladarius Green
QB	7	Ben Roethlisberger	3	Landry Jones
RB	26	Le'Veon Bell		James Conner (R)

DEFENSE

DE	97	Cameron Heyward		Tyson Alualu
DT	79	Javon Hargrave	93	Daniel McCullers
DE	91	Stephon Tuitt	96	L.T. Walton
OLB	48	Bud Dupree	55	Arthur Moats
ILB	50	Ryan Shazier	44	Tyler Matakevich
ILB	98	Vince Williams	54	L.J. Fort
OLB	92	James Harrison		T.J. Watt (R)
CB	25	Artie Burns		Cameron Sutton (R)
CB	31	Ross Cockrell	22	William Gay
SS	28	Sean Davis	21	Robert Golden
FS	23	Mike Mitchell	21	Robert Golden

SPECIALISTS

K	9	Chris Boswell	KR	14	Sammie Coates
P	4	Jordan Berry	PR	84	Antonio Brown

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
DE	Tyson Alualu	Jacksonville
RB	Knile Davis	Kansas City
WR	Justin Hunter	Buffalo
CB	Coty Sensabaugh	N.Y. Giants

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
LB	Jarvis Jones	Arizona
DE	Ricardo Mathews	Free Agent
LB	Lawrence Timmons	Miami
WR	Markus Wheaton	Chicago
RB	DeAngelo Williams	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE STEELERS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP PITTSBURGH "In a season that will certainly be dedicated to their late owner, Dan Rooney, the Steelers believe they are ready to make a run at the Patriots for supremacy in the AFC. ... Ben Roethlisberger flirted with retirement, but the belief is that he will play at least three more years. ... Landry Jones is the backup, but they made an interesting pick in Tennessee's Joshua Dobbs after he impressed Mike Tomlin at his pro day. ... When available, Le'Veon Bell is one of the five best players in the league. He makes it look easy with his gliding running style and ability to catch out of the backfield. ... Pitt's James Conner, a cancer survivor, was added for depth among a host of candidates. ... Antonio Brown is simply amazing with his work ethic, detailed pass routes and sticky hands. ... They drafted JuJu Smith-Schuster from USC in the second round to give them a more consistent, big-bodied receiver, while Eli Rogers has proven to be a reliable slot. ... The offensive line returns intact, and they have one job to do: protect Big Ben. ... Defensively, they desperately need a healthy Cameron Heyward to return after playing in only seven games in 2016. ... James Harrison led the team with five sacks, so they drafted Wisconsin's T.J. Watt in the first round to add to their mix. ... Bud Dupree has flashed (4.5 sacks in seven games), but this is a huge year for him. ... Ryan Shazier takes over the leadership role after Lawrence Timmons left for Miami. ... Their secondary depth is better after drafting Sean Davis and Artie Burns last year and Cam Sutton in the third round this past spring. ... Barring injuries, I like this team to win the North; and if more pass rush can surface and the back end matures, the Steelers can contend for the Super Bowl."

Watt: Tom Lynn; Harrison: W. E. Smith III

STEELERS IN THE DRAFT

B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	T.J. Watt	OLB	6-4	252	Wisconsin
2.	JuJu Smith-Schuster	WR	6-1	215	USC
3.	Cameron Sutton	CB	5-11	188	Tennessee
3.	James Conner	RB	6-1	233	Pittsburgh
4.	Joshua Dobbs	QB	6-3	216	Tennessee
5.	Brian Allen	CB	6-3	215	Utah
6.	Colin Holba	LS	6-4	248	Louisville
7.	Keion Adams	OLB	6-2	245	Western Michigan

The Steelers are hoping their latest first-round pick, Wisconsin linebacker T.J. Watt, can help fill the void of a 2013 first-round pick, Jarvis Jones, who simply didn't pan out. Hitting areas of need was a theme for Pittsburgh, which added another wide receiver, USC's JuJu Smith-Schuster, to an already-loaded group that is expected to be buoyed by the return of Martavis Bryant. Smith-Schuster was very productive in his three seasons playing in a pro-style offense at USC. James Conner, who overcame cancer and a torn MCL during his time at the University of Pittsburgh, was a poplar pick with the locals. Tennessee QB Joshua Dobbs gives Pittsburgh a potential long-term answer behind Ben Roethlisberger and a likely short-term fix for the struggles of Landry Jones. He is a tremendous athlete but must become a more accurate passer if he hopes to become a starter in the NFL. Colin Holba will step in as the Steelers' long snapper.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

EARLY CONNECTION Before the Steelers landed James Conner in the third round of the NFL Draft, the University of Pittsburgh running back got a feel for his new quarterback. Conner and Steelers veteran Ben Roethlisberger, who are represented by the same agency, worked together on a number of different routes. The session was documented by NFL Films and aired on the show "Hey Rookie, Welcome to the NFL." Though Conner is more of a bruising, short-yardage back, he showed off his hands as a senior with the Panthers, catching 21 passes for 302 yards and four touchdowns after amassing just nine receptions in the previous three years combined.

ROOKIE ROOMMATES Joshua Dobbs and Cameron Sutton just can't be separated. The rookie quarterback and defensive back were roommates at the University of Tennessee and could be again during training camp, as the Steelers used a third-round selection on Sutton and a fourth-rounder on Dobbs. In a post-draft conference call, Dobbs explained that the relationship between Sutton and himself stretches back to fourth grade, when the two faced each other in travel football games in their native Georgia.

JUST LIKE OLDER BROTHER Steelers first-round pick T.J. Watt didn't have quite the same unexpected path to the NFL as his older brother, All-Pro defensive end J.J. Watt, but there was a bump or two along the way. The younger Watt began his college career at Wisconsin as a tight end. It wasn't until 2015, after suffering multiple knee injuries, when he switched to outside linebacker. After picking up just eight tackles during his first season as a linebacker, Watt broke out in a big way this past year, racking up 63 tackles and 11.5 sacks to earn first-team All-America honors.

DOWN FOR A DIP JuJu Smith-Schuster was so excited to hear his name called in the second round of the draft, he didn't bother to change into his swim trunks. The USC receiver, flanked by family and friends, ran straight into the Pacific Ocean after the Steelers gave him the good news. "It meant a lot to get that call. I had to work hard for it," Smith-Schuster told reporters after the draft. "The waiting, not getting called on the first day. And the second day, when I finally got that, it was unbelievable. It really meant a lot, because I didn't get called earlier. When you have family behind you, and they're waiting and waiting and you finally get the call, I was speechless."

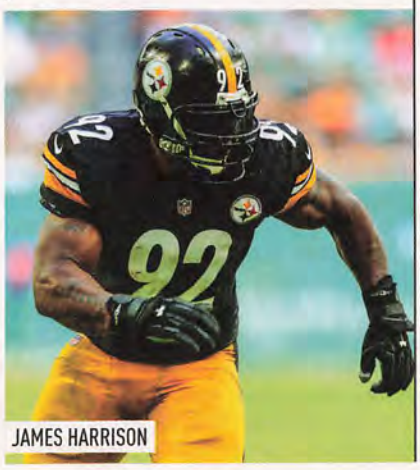
HOOP DREAMS Antonio Brown knows how to stay busy and in shape during the offseason. In late April, Brown spent some time in the Miami Heat's facility with Hassan Whiteside, and the two even engaged in a little one-on-one. The 5'10" Brown gave up more than a foot to Whiteside, a 7-foot shot-blocking specialist, but he found a way to put points on the board by swishing a number of 3-pointers.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

4.1 The Steelers ranked first in the NFL in Adjusted Sack Rate, allowing only 4.1 percent of their pass snaps to become sacks.

14 The Steelers ran fewer play-action passes (14 percent of pass snaps) than any other team in the league.

4.2 The Steelers allowed just 4.2 points per opposing red-zone possession, the second-lowest figure in the NFL.



JAMES HARRISON

HOUSTON TEXANS

AFC SOUTH FORECAST

2

In Bill O'Brien's first three seasons, the Texans have been amazingly consistent — three consecutive 9–7 records, including the last two AFC South titles and a playoff victory last year. And they have closed each season going 3–1 down the stretch.

J.J. Watt returns to a defense that ranked first last season, but the Texans lost three starters in free agency on that side of the ball, and they still have a problem at quarterback.

In Tom Savage — not first-round pick Deshaun Watson — the Texans will have a new starting quarterback for the fifth consecutive season. Savage follows Matt Schaub (2013), Ryan Fitzpatrick (2014), Brian Hoyer (2015) and Brock Osweiler (2016). The one-year experiment with Osweiler was a disaster. The Texans paid dearly — $37 million guaranteed — to get Osweiler, and they sacrificed a second-round pick in 2018 to convince Cleveland to take him off their hands. Then the Browns accepted the Texans' No. 1 pick next year to swap spots in the first round, allowing them to move from 25 to 12 to select Watson. So, Osweiler is out. Savage is in. Watson is on the bench — watching, learning and waiting.

OFFENSE O'Brien will be calling the plays this year. Offensive coordinator George Godsey was forced out after the Texans finished 29th in yards and 31st in the red zone.

Savage replaced Osweiler late last season and would have started in the playoffs if not for a concussion suffered in the last regular-season game. Savage has a strong arm, can make any throw, knows O'Brien's system and can handle his tough-love coaching. Entering the last year of his contract, Savage will be under a lot of pressure. He's started two games, has never thrown a touchdown pass and has been injured each season. If he struggles early, fans and media will create a huge controversy by demanding that Watson play.

The plan is not to rush Watson into the lineup. If Savage is benched or injured, veteran Brandon Weeden could be the first option. Watson will be a spectator until O'Brien is comfortable that he knows enough of the system not to risk slowing his development.

In O'Brien's first three seasons, the Texans have run the ball more than any team in the league. They'll rely heavily on a ground-and-pound mentality featuring veteran Lamar Miller (1,073 yards rushing) and rookie D'Onta Foreman, a third-round pick who rushed for more than 2,000 yards last season at Texas. Miller shouldered the workload with a career-high 268 carries. Foreman is expected to excel between the tackles. Tyler Ervin, a change-of-pace back in his second season, should become a weapon out of the backfield.

The receivers should be happier with Savage because he can throw any route. DeAndre Hopkins never seemed to click with Osweiler, finishing with 78 catches for 954 yards and four touchdowns. Hopkins seems to have a good on-field rapport with Savage. Hopkins has terrific hands and an impressive catch radius that'll help the quarterback's accuracy. Savage should benefit from expected improvement by two second-year receivers, Will Fuller and Braxton Miller, first- and third-round picks last year. Fuller is a tremendous deep threat but drops too many passes. He's got to improve his route running. With a year to learn, Miller is expected to contribute in the slot.

For the first time under O'Brien, the tight ends figured prominently in the passing game. C.J. Fiedorowicz and Ryan Griffin combined for 104 catches for 1,001 yards and six TDs. At 6'5" and 6'6", respectively, Fiedorowicz and Griffin are inviting targets who prefer to run routes down the middle, and they don't shy away from contact.

The run blocking and pass protection were inconsistent and must improve. The left side with tackle Duane Brown, the team's best lineman, and guard Xavier Su'a-Filo was better than the right side, where guard Jeff Allen was a disappointment after signing as a free agent. Right tackle Derek Newton went down with ruptured quad tendons in both legs and won't be back anytime soon, if at all. Chris Clark was forced to start, and he was the worst lineman the Texans had. Kendall Lamm should start at right tackle until

THE ORGANIZATION

FOUNDER/CHAIRMAN/CEO: Robert C. McNair
VICE CHAIRMAN: D. Cal McNair
EXECUTIVE VP/GENERAL MANAGER: Rick Smith
VP OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION: Chris Olsen
STADIUM: NRG Stadium (72,220)
SURFACE: UBU Speed Series S5-M
WEBSITE: www.houstontexans.com
TICKETS: 832-667-2002
TRAINING CAMP: The Greenbrier (White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Bill O'Brien
RECORD WITH TEAM: 27–21
CAREER RECORD: 27–21
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: George Godsey
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Mike Vrabel
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Larry Izzo
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/DEFENSE: Romeo Crennel
QUARTERBACKS: Sean Ryan
RUNNING BACKS: Charles London
WIDE RECEIVERS: John Perry
TIGHT ENDS: Tim Kelly
OFFENSIVE LINE: Mike Devlin
DEFENSIVE LINE: Anthony Weaver
LINEBACKERS: Bobby King
SECONDARY: John Butler

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Sept. 14	at Cincinnati (Thu.)	8:25	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Sept. 24	at New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Oct. 1	Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Oct. 8	Kansas City	8:30	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Oct. 15	Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
BYE							
Oct. 29	at Seattle	4:05	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Nov. 5	Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Nov. 12	at L.A. Rams	4:05	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Nov. 19	Arizona	1:00	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Nov. 27	at Baltimore (Mon.)	8:30	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Dec. 3	at Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Dec. 10	San Francisco	1:00	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Dec. 17	at Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Dec. 25	Pittsburgh (Mon.)	4:30	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Dec. 31	at Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)

2016 NFL RANKINGS

W. E. Smith III

DE J.J. WATT

2016 RESULTS (9-7)

Sept. 11	Chicago	W	23-14
Sept. 18	Kansas City	W	19-12
Sept. 22	at New England	L	0-27
Oct. 2	Tennessee	W	27-20
Oct. 9	at Minnesota	L	13-31
Oct. 16	Indianapolis (ot)	W	26-23
Oct. 24	at Denver	L	9-27
Oct. 30	Detroit	W	20-13
Nov. 13	at Jacksonville	W	24-21
Nov. 21	at Oakland	L	20-27
Nov. 27	L.A. Chargers	L	13-21
Dec. 4	at Green Bay	L	13-21
Dec. 11	at Indianapolis	W	22-17
Dec. 18	Jacksonville	W	21-20
Dec. 24	Cincinnati	W	12-10
Jan. 1	at Tennessee	L	17-24
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 7	Oakland	W	27-14
Jan. 14	at New England	L	16-34

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Brock Osweiler	510	301	2,957	15	16
Tom Savage	73	46	461	0	0
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Lamar Miller	268	1,073	4.0	5	
Alfred Blue	100	420	4.2	1	
Brock Osweiler	30	131	4.4	2	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
DeAndre Hopkins	78	954	12.2	4	
C.J. Fiedorowicz	54	559	10.4	4	
Ryan Griffin	50	442	8.8	2	
Will Fuller	47	635	13.5	2	
Lamar Miller	31	188	6.1	1	

KICKING: Nick Novak, 35-41 FGs, 22-25 PAT, 127 points
TACKLES: Benardrick McKinney, 129; Brian Cushing, 65
SACKS: Whitney Mercilus, 7.5; Jadeveon Clowney, 6.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Quintin Demps, 6; Andre Hal, 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	314.7	29	15
Rushing	116.2	8	5
Passing	198.5	29	15
Scoring	17.4	T28	14
Third Down %	37.3	22	10
Punt Returns	10.9	7	3
Kick Returns	18.6	T28	T14

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	301.3	1	1
Rushing	99.7	12	6
Passing	201.6	2	2
Scoring	20.5	11	7
Interceptions	11	T21	12
Sacks	31	T24	T11
Turnover Differential	-7	T26	T12

JADEVEON CLOWNEY

rookie Julién Davenport is ready. Center Greg Mancz, forced into the lineup when rookie Nick Martin suffered a season-ending ankle injury during training camp, was a nice surprise as a run blocker and pass protector. Martin returns, frothing at the mouth to win back the starting job, which could cause Mancz to move to right guard.

DEFENSE Mike Vrabel, who did an outstanding job coaching linebackers, was promoted to coordinator. Romeo Crennel was named assistant head coach after guiding the defense to its No. 1 ranking.

When Watt was healthy in the first two games, the Texans were 2–0 and recorded nine sacks. With Watt done for the season after a second back surgery, it took them seven games to record nine more. Still, switching Jadeveon Clowney from outside linebacker to right end was a brilliant move. Healthy for the first time, Clowney dominated against the run, recording 12 tackles for a loss to go with six sacks. He is strong, quick and disruptive. With Watt and Clowney as bookends for second-year nose tackle D.J. Reader, who replaced Vince Wilfork, the Texans believe they can have the league's best defensive line.

The defense is also strong at linebacker. Whitney Mercilus patrols the right side and is one of the best in the league because he can rush the passer, stop the run and drop into coverage. In his second season, Benardrick McKinney became a force on the inside and was the only player in the NFL with at least 100 tackles and five sacks. He's physical against the run, filling the gaps and penetrating. He's underrated as a pass rusher but struggles in coverage against backs with speed and quickness. Brian Cushing, entering his ninth season, is the heart and soul of the defense and sets the tempo. He's still a force against the run but doesn't have the speed for coverage. One reason the Texans used a second-round pick on linebacker Zach Cunningham is because he has sideline-to-sideline speed and can cover running backs on pass routes. John Simon left as a free agent, and they have to find a replacement who can set the edge opposite Mercilus. The leading candidate is Brennan Scarlett.

Cornerback Kevin Johnson was doing a terrific job in coverage and against the run until he suffered a season-ending foot injury. Johnson's return should help offset the loss of A.J. Bouye, who stepped in and played so well that Jacksonville gave him $13.5 million per year to switch AFC South teams. Johnathan Joseph and Kareem Jackson have been starters at cornerback since 2011. Jackson moves inside when Johnson plays in nickel situations. Safety Quintin Demps, who led the team with six interceptions, was a free-agent casualty. The Texans have five safeties, including part-time starters Corey Moore and Andre Hal as well as highly regarded K.J. Dillon, who spent his rookie season on injured reserve.

SPECIALISTS Coverage and returns have been a perennial problem. Larry Izzo was a first-year special teams coordinator in 2016. Wes Welker has been hired to assist Izzo and help with receivers. Too bad they can't suit up.

The kicking game is in good hands with punter Shane Lechler entering his 18th season. He still has power but relies more on direction and hang time. Placekicker Nick Novak missed only three field goals inside the 50 but lacks the leg strength to consistently kick off into the end zone. Running back Akeem Hunt, the best kickoff returner, may not make the team. The best punt returner is Fuller, but he's a starter and too fragile for double duty.

FINAL ANALYSIS The plan is to win a third division title in a row, try to get home-field advantage in the playoffs and contend for the Super Bowl. That's the plan, but, on paper at least, the Texans have too many holes to be a legitimate Super Bowl contender. And it may even be wishful thinking to win a fifth AFC South title in seven years, because the rest of the division, particularly Tennessee, improved in free agency and the draft. The running game and defense had better be prepared to compensate for more trouble at quarterback.

W. E. Smith III

2017 VETERAN TEXANS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
3 Savage, Tom	QB	6-4	230	3	Pittsburgh	D4-14	D4-Hou-14
5 Weeden, Brandon	QB	6-4	230	5	Oklahoma State	W-Dal-15	D1b-Cle-12
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
28 Blue, Alfred	RB	6-2	225	3	LSU	D6b-14	D6b-Hou-14
34 Ervin, Tyler	RB	5-10	185	1	San Jose State	D4-16	D4-Hou-16
38 Hilliard, Kenny	RB	5-11	225	1	LSU	FA-16	D7-Hou-15
33 Hunt, Akeem	RB	5-10	200	2	Purdue	FA-15	FA-NYG-15
26 Miller, Lamar	RB	5-10	220	5	Miami	FA-Mia-16	D4-Mia-12
45 Prosch, Jay	FB	6-1	255	3	Auburn	D6c-14	D6c-Hou-14
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
88 Allen, RaShaun	TE	6-4	250	2	Southern	FA-16	FA-Sea-14
89 Anderson, Stephen	TE	6-2	235	1	California	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
87 Fiedorowicz, C.J.	TE	6-5	265	3	Iowa	D3a-14	D3a-Hou-14
15 Fuller V, Will	WR	6-0	180	1	Notre Dame	D1-16	D1-Hou-16
84 Griffin, Ryan	TE	6-6	265	4	Connecticut	D6d-13	D6d-Hou-13
10 Hopkins, DeAndre	WR	6-1	215	4	Clemson	D1-13	D1-Hou-13
85 Jones, Tevin	WR	6-2	225	1	Memphis	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
13 Miller, Braxton	WR	6-1	205	1	Ohio State	D3-16	D3-Hou-16
12 Mumphery, Keith	WR	6-0	210	2	Michigan State	D5-15	D5-Hou-15
11 Strong, Jaelen	WR	6-2	205	2	Arizona State	D3-15	D3-Hou-15
82 Williams, Wendall	WR	5-10	185	1	Cumberlands	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
79 Allen, Jeff	G	6-4	325	5	Illinois	FA-KC-16	D2-KC-12
76 Brown, Duane	T	6-4	315	9	Virginia Tech	D1-08	D1-Hou-08
74 Clark, Chris	T	6-5	305	7	Southern Miss.	T-Den-15	FA-Min-08
64 Gibson, Laurence	T	6-6	305	1	Virginia Tech	FA-16	D7-Dal-15
63 Lamm, Kendall	T	6-6	310	2	Appalachian State	FA-15	FA-Hou-15
65 Mancz, Greg	C	6-4	310	2	Toledo	FA-15	FA-Hou-15
66 Martin, Nick	C	6-4	300	1	Notre Dame	D2-16	D2-Hou-16
72 Newton, Derek	T	6-6	315	6	Arkansas State	D7a-11	D7a-Hou-11
77 Quessenberry, David	G	6-5	306	4	San Jose State	D6a-13	D6a-Hou-13
62 Slade, Chad	G	6-5	315	2	Auburn	FA-15	FA-Hou-15
71 Su'a-Filo, Xavier	G	6-4	320	3	UCLA	D2-14	D2-Hou-14
73 Walker, Josh	G	6-5	328	2	Middle Tennessee	FA-16	FA-Ind-14
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
90 Clowney, Jadeveon	DE	6-5	270	3	South Carolina	D1-14	D1-Hou-14
95 Covington, Christian	DE	6-2	305	2	Rice	D6b-15	D6b-Hou-15
92 Dunn, Brandon	DE	6-2	310	2	Louisville	FA-15	FA-Chi-14
93 Heath, Joel	DE	6-6	300	1	Michigan State	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
97 Kamalu, Ufomba	DE	6-6	295	1	Miami	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
98 Reader, D.J.	NT	6-3	335	1	Clemson	D5b-16	D5b-Hou-16
99 Watt, J.J.	DE	6-5	295	6	Wisconsin	D1-11	D1-Hou-11
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
53 Bullough, Max	ILB	6-3	245	2	Michigan State	FA-14	FA-Hou-14
56 Cushing, Brian	ILB	6-3	255	8	USC	D1-09	D1-Hou-09
47 Lee, Eric	OLB	6-3	260	1	South Florida	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
55 McKinney, Benardrick	ILB	6-4	260	2	Mississippi State	D2-15	D2-Hou-15
59 Mercilus, Whitney	OLB	6-4	265	5	Illinois	D1-12	D1-Hou-12
52 Peters, Brian	ILB	6-4	240	2	Northwestern	FA-15	FA-Min-15
42 Rashad, Shakeel	OLB	6-2	240	1	North Carolina	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
57 Scarlett, Brennan	OLB	6-4	260	1	Stanford	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
49 Washington Jr., Tony	OLB	6-4	255	1	Oregon	FA-15	FA-Hou-15
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
39 Ballentine, Lonnie	S	6-3	225	3	Memphis	D7b-14	D7b-Hou-14
36 Dillon, K.J.	S	6-0	200	1	West Virginia	D5a-16	D5a-Hou-16
23 Drummond, Kurtis	S	6-1	200	2	Michigan State	FA-15	FA-Hou-15
29 Hal, Andre	S	5-10	195	3	Vanderbilt	D7a-14	D7a-Hou-14
25 Jackson, Kareem	CB	5-10	185	7	Alabama	D1-10	D1-Hou-10
30 Johnson, Kevin	CB	6-0	185	2	Wake Forest	D1-15	D1-Hou-15
24 Joseph, Johnathan	CB	5-11	185	11	South Carolina	FA-Cin-11	D1-Cin-06
43 Moore, Corey	S	6-2	200	1	Georgia	FA-15	FA-Hou-15
32 Nelson, Robert	CB	5-10	170	2	Arizona State	FA-15	FA-Cle-14
35 Pleasant, Eddie	S	5-10	200	4	Oregon	FA-12	FA-Hou-12
22 Rice, Denzel	CB	6-0	196	2	Coastal Carolina	FA-16	FA-Phi-15
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
Carter, Cory	P	5-9	200	1	Texas Southern	FA-17	FA-Hou-17
7 Fairbairn, Ka'imi	K	6-0	190	1	UCLA	FA-16	FA-Hou-16
9 Lechler, Shane	P	6-2	230	17	Texas A&M	FA-Oak-13	D5-Oak-00
8 Novak, Nick	K	6-0	200	9	Maryland	FA-15	FA-Chi-05
46 Weeks, Jon	LS	5-10	250	7	Baylor	FA-10	FA-Hou-10

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	10	DeAndre Hopkins	12	Keith Mumphery
WR	15	Will Fuller	13	Braxton Miller
LT	76	Duane Brown	74	Chris Clark
LG	71	Xavier Su'a-Filo	73	Josh Walker
C	66	Nick Martin	65	Greg Mancz
RG	79	Jeff Allen	77	David Quessenberry
RT	63	Kendall Lamm	70	Julién Davenport (R)
TE	87	C.J. Fiedorowicz	84	Ryan Griffin
QB	3	Tom Savage	4	Deshaun Watson (R)
FB	45	Jay Prosch		
RB	26	Lamar Miller	27	D'Onta Foreman (R)

DEFENSE

DE	99	J.J. Watt	93	Joel Heath
NT	98	D.J. Reader	91	Carlos Watkins (R)
DE	90	Jadeveon Clowney	95	Christian Covington
OLB	59	Whitney Mercilus	49	Tony Washington Jr.
ILB	56	Brian Cushing	53	Max Bullough
ILB	55	Benardrick McKinney	41	Zach Cunningham (R)
OLB	57	Brennan Scarlett	42	Shakeel Rashad
CB	24	Johnathan Joseph	32	Robert Nelson
CB	25	Kareem Jackson	30	Kevin Johnson
SS	43	Corey Moore	36	K.J. Dillon
FS	29	Andre Hal	35	Eddie Pleasant

SPECIALISTS

K	8	Nick Novak	KR	33	Akeem Hunt
P	9	Shane Lechler	PR	34	Tyler Ervin

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

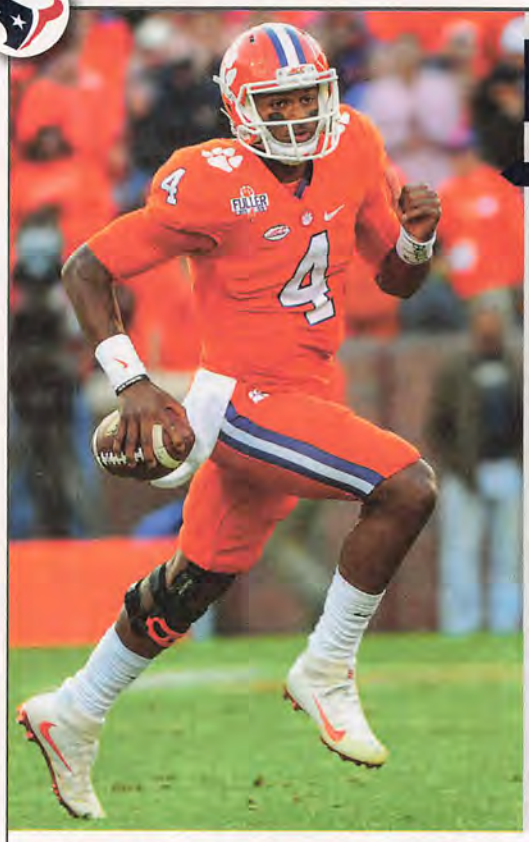
POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
None		

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
G	Oday Aboushi	Seattle
CB	A.J. Bouye	Jacksonville
S	Quintin Demps	Chicago
S	Don Jones	San Francisco
OLB	John Simon	Indianapolis
NT	Vince Wilfork	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE TEXANS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP HOUSTON "The Texans have a proven playoff-caliber team. But it is amazing that GM Rick Smith and head coach Bill O'Brien have been given a free pass on their handling of the quarterback position. They creatively found a way to escape the Brock Osweiler contract, then gave up their 2018 first-rounder to move up for Clemson's Deshaun Watson. ... No matter what they say, Tom Savage won't be the quarterback of this team by mid-October. ... Running back Lamar Miller was a quality signing for them last year, and their expectation on offense is that Nick Martin will improve the interior of the line, while wideout Will Fuller should increase his consistency and Braxton Miller comes to life as a slot receiver. ... DeAndre Hopkins is up for an extension, and his play would be even more impressive with a real NFL quarterback. ... The defense is their calling card and had an amazing year in 2016, despite J.J. Watt missing basically the entire season. ... In the meantime, Jadeveon Clowney finally hit his stride as a third-year pro, and Whitney Mercilus has quietly become a pass rusher who must be accounted for by the opposing offense. ... Benardrick McKinney has been a good find as an inside linebacker, but his lack of speed shows up in coverage, hence their selection of Vanderbilt's Zach Cunningham as a combo inside/outside backer. ... Houston lost A.J. Bouye to the Jaguars in free agency, but they still believe in corners Kareem Jackson and Jonathan Joseph. The Kevin Johnson selection two years ago looks like a wise choice now. ... Still, everything here rides on Watson, who was the most mature and experienced signal caller available in the draft. After Tony Romo retired and was unavailable to them, Smith and O'Brien are hoping Deshaun can be their Dak Prescott in 2017 and beyond."



TEXANS IN THE *DRAFT*

A

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	**Deshaun Watson**	**QB**	**6-2**	**221**	**Clemson**
2.	Zach Cunningham	ILB	6-3	234	Vanderbilt
3.	D'Onta Foreman	RB	6-0	233	Texas
4.	Julién Davenport	OT	6-7	318	Bucknell
4.	Carlos Watkins	NT	6-3	309	Clemson
5.	Treston Decoud	CB	6-2	206	Oregon State
7.	Kyle Fuller	C	6-5	307	Baylor

General manager Rick Smith said if there was a theme to the Texans' 2017 draft, it was character and production. The Texans place a huge emphasis on character as well as talent and what a player accomplished in college. Smith traded up in the first round to select quarterback Deshaun Watson. Watson will be given time to develop, but Smith and Bill O'Brien are hoping he eventually solidifies the longstanding problem at quarterback. Smith used three of his first four picks on offensive players, including tackle Julién Davenport, who'll be groomed to start on the right side. D'Onta Foreman, who was one of the most productive players in college football last year, will be involved in the running game. The first defensive player picked was Zach Cunningham, a consensus All-American at Vanderbilt. The Texans picked Cunningham as an inside linebacker, but he can also play on the outside. Carlos Watkins was a teammate of Watson's at Clemson and was a key part of the Tigers' tenacious defensive line.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

BROTHERLY LOVE Defensive end J.J. Watt had more than a passing interest in the draft. His youngest brother, Wisconsin outside linebacker T.J. Watt, entered the draft as an underclassman. Pittsburgh selected T.J. Watt in the first round, setting up what should be a Merry Christmas for one of them. The Texans host the Steelers in a nationally televised game on Christmas Day. "I think that'll be a really cool and a weird day for me," T.J. Watt says. The middle brother, San Diego fullback Derek Watt, will not be playing against either brother this season.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOM The day after quarterback Deshaun Watson was introduced as the Texans' first-round pick was his mother's birthday. Watson said he wanted to surprise his mother on April 29 with a special birthday present. Deann was overwhelmed when he gave her a 2017 Jaguar. "I owe everything to her," Watson says.

SAVAGE NAILS IT DOWN In what little spare time he has, quarterback Tom Savage can be quite the carpenter. His father owns a construction company in Springfield, Pa. When Savage sat out the 2012 season after transferring from Rutgers and Arizona, he worked for his father. Rather than wearing shoulder pads, he strapped on a tool belt, hard hat and protective goggles. Savage, who enters camp as a starter for the first time in his four-year career and is in the last year of his contract, is handy with a saw and nail gun. He can build furniture and can install electrical fixtures. He vows never to drywall again after doing it so much for his father's company five years ago.

HOME SWEET HOME Running back D'Onta Foreman, the third-round pick, grew up in Texas City, a Houston suburb. No one is more excited about the pick than Foreman's father. "I don't have to buy Texans gear because I'm already loaded," Derrick Foreman says. "I just need a D'Onta jersey."

SAVED BY THE BELL After three years of battling lymphoma, offensive lineman David Quessenberry finally finished his chemotherapy at the Houston Medical Center. On the wall was a bell next to a plaque that read, "Now that you have completed your chemotherapy treatment, ring the bell to tell the world you are on your way to being well." Quessenberry, who is 6'5" and 306 now that he's regained the weight he lost, rang the bell so hard he broke it.

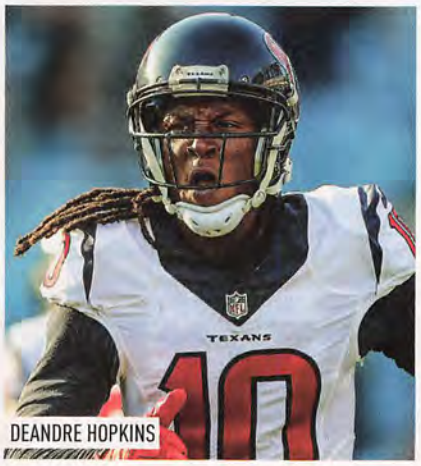
NO CLOWNING AROUND When South Carolina was trying to win the NCAA basketball title, one of the Gamecocks' biggest fans was one of their former football players, defensive end Jadeveon Clowney — a Rock Hill, S.C., native who starred at South Carolina from 2011-13. As a pro, Clowney (6'5", 272) finally hit his stride in 2016, earning Pro Bowl and All-Pro recognition. In April, the Texans picked up the fifth-year option on his contract, and he's expected to sign an extension after this season.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

13 The Texans scored a touchdown on just 13 percent of their drives, ranking them second to last in the NFL.

5.4 Opponents averaged just 5.4 plays per drive against the Houston defense, fewest in the NFL.

7.6 The Texans finished tied for last in the league in broken tackles as an offense, creating them on just 7.6 percent of offensive plays.



DEANDRE HOPKINS

Watson: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Hopkins: W. E. Smith III

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

AFC SOUTH FORECAST

3

As quarterback Andrew Luck mends from offseason shoulder surgery, his Indianapolis Colts have undergone sweeping changes in an effort to cure what has ailed a team that finished 8–8 and out of the playoffs the past two seasons — despite playing in the weak AFC South.

A deteriorating defense combined with an inability to find the right players to protect Luck forced owner Jim Irsay to make a move in the front office. Out as general manager is Ryan Grigson. In is Chris Ballard, who is regarded as an up-and-coming talent evaluator after a productive stint in Kansas City. What's odd is that Irsay stuck by head coach Chuck Pagano, who was rumored to be on the way out after a second consecutive eight-win season. Pagano has been told that his future will be determined by Ballard after the 2017 season.

Ballard has begun his tenure by removing several of his predecessor's failings, most notably by releasing defensive tackle Arthur Jones and signing more than a dozen free agents. But regardless of all of the personnel changes, the Colts' immediate future depends upon Luck, who is expected to be 100 percent by the team's opener.

OFFENSE Luck, the three-time Pro Bowl quarterback, suffered a torn labrum in 2015 but put off the surgical procedure until the painful situation became unbearable. After taking 41 more sacks in 2016, bringing his five-year, 70-game total to 156, Luck relented to having his injury fixed. But what hasn't been fixed is an offensive line that is inconsistent at best in pass protection and still sporting holes. The only real change in recent years has been the addition of promising first-round pick Ryan Kelly at center last year.

Although Ballard has brought in several new linemen in hopes of creating competition, Grigson used to do the same thing, and it never panned out. So, while former second-round pick Jack Mewhort returns to left guard, training camp will be about determining who will line up on the right side. Is second-year pro Joe Haeg the answer at right tackle? Is third-year pro Denzelle Good consistent enough to stick at right guard?

Beyond that, do the Colts have enough weapons to take the pressure off Luck and that O-line? Pro Bowl wide receiver T.Y. Hilton is one of the NFL's best deep threats, but the next-best skill returnee is tight end Jack Doyle, a hard-working overachiever and hometown-hero who was rewarded with a $19 million contract. Ballard rid himself of tight end Dwayne Allen's overpriced contract by trading him to New England. Donte Moncrief, the No. 2 wide receiver, had seven TD catches but also missed seven games due to injury. Phillip Dorsett, a 2015 first-round pick, has caught only 51 passes and scored three touchdowns in his two seasons. He is on the verge of becoming a bust.

Running back Frank Gore became the first running back 33 or older to rush for 1,000 yards since John Riggins in 1984. But Gore is in the final year of his contract, and the Colts need to be looking for a long-term ball carrier. Robert Turbin rushed for 164 yards in a reserve role in his first season in Indianapolis. The team used a fourth-round pick on Marlon Mack, who will have an opportunity to be the No. 2 back.

DEFENSE The Colts have struggled to generate a pass rush in their 3-4 scheme since Robert Mathis led the NFL with 19.5 sacks in 2013. As opposing passers took advantage of the extra time to throw, Colts defenders got older, too. Mathis finally retired this offseason. Outside linebacker Erik Walden, despite recording a career-high 11 sacks, wasn't re-signed.

Ballard looked at a 30th-ranked defense and spent wisely on getting younger. Few of the new players received guaranteed money beyond next season. One exception was nose tackle Johnathan Hankins, who is still just 25 and could be the Colts' best defensive line anchor in a decade. He was signed to a three-year, $30 million deal.

Defensive ends Kendall Langford and

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/CEO: James Irsay
GENERAL MANAGER: Chris Ballard
DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION: Mike Bluem
STADIUM: Lucas Oil Stadium (67,000)
SURFACE: Fieldturf Classic HD
WEBSITE: www.colts.com
TICKETS: 317-299-4946
TRAINING CAMP: Indiana Farm Bureau Football Center (Indianapolis, Ind.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Chuck Pagano
RECORD WITH TEAM: 49–31
CAREER RECORD: 49–31
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Rob Chudzinski
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Ted Monachino
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Tom McMahon
ASST. HEAD COACH/OFFENSIVE LINE: Joe Philbin
QUARTERBACKS: Brian Schottenheimer
RUNNING BACKS: Jemal Singleton
WIDE RECEIVERS: Sanjay Lal
TIGHT ENDS: Jim Hostler
DEFENSIVE LINE: Gary Emanuel
LINEBACKERS: Jim Herrmann
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS: Brad White
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Greg Williams

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2012	11
2013	11
2014	11
2015	8
2016	8

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	at L.A. Rams	4:05	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Sept. 17	Arizona	1:00	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Sept. 24	Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Oct. 1	at Seattle	8:30	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Oct. 8	San Francisco	1:00	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Oct. 16	at Tennessee (Mon.)	8:30	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Oct. 22	Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Oct. 29	at Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Nov. 5	at Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Nov. 12	Pittsburgh	1:00	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
BYE							
Nov. 26	Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Dec. 3	at Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Dec. 10	at Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Dec. 14	Denver (Thu.)	8:25	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Dec. 23	at Baltimore (Sat.)	4:30	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Dec. 31	Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)

QB ANDREW LUCK

2016 RESULTS (8-8)

Sept. 11	Detroit	L	35-39
Sept. 18	at Denver	L	20-34
Sept. 25	L.A. Chargers	W	26-22
Oct. 2	at Jacksonville	L	27-30
Oct. 9	Chicago	W	29-23
Oct. 16	at Houston (ot)	L	23-26
Oct. 23	at Tennessee	W	34-26
Oct. 30	Kansas City	L	14-30
Nov. 6	at Green Bay	W	31-26
Nov. 20	Tennessee	W	24-17
Nov. 24	Pittsburgh	L	7-28
Dec. 5	at N.Y. Jets	W	41-10
Dec. 11	Houston	L	17-22
Dec. 18	at Minnesota	W	34-6
Dec. 24	at Oakland	L	25-33
Jan. 1	Jacksonville	W	24-20

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Andrew Luck	545	346	4,240	31	13
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Frank Gore	263	1,025	3.9	4	
Andrew Luck	64	341	5.3	2	
Robert Turbin	47	164	3.5	7	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
T.Y. Hilton	91	1,448	15.9	6	
Jack Doyle	59	584	9.9	5	
Frank Gore	38	277	7.3	4	
Dwayne Allen	35	406	11.6	6	
Phillip Dorsett	33	528	16.0	2	
Donte Moncrief	30	307	10.2	7	

KICKING: Adam Vinatieri, 27-31 FGs, 44-44 PAT, 125 points
TACKLES: Mike Adams, 79; D'Qwell Jackson, 78
SACKS: Erik Walden, 11.0; Robert Mathis, 5.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Darius Butler, 3; Mike Adams, 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	364.4	10	4
Rushing	101.8	23	13
Passing	262.6	T5	T2
Scoring	25.7	8	3
Third Down %	43.1	7	3
Punt Returns	8.3	T17	8
Kick Returns	25.1	T4	T2

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	382.9	30	15
Rushing	120.4	25	11
Passing	262.5	27	15
Scoring	24.5	22	12
Interceptions	8	T29	T14
Sacks	33	T19	T7
Turnover Differential	-5	T24	11

T. Y. HILTON

Henry Anderson hope to return to 2015 form after being slowed by injuries a year ago. Jones' departure at defensive tackle will free up snaps for someone, and there are many options from which to choose — but none of them appears to be dazzling. Nose tackle Al Woods, defensive end Margus Hunt and second-year defensive lineman Hassan Ridgeway should get their share of snaps.

But if the Colts' blitzing scheme is going to flourish by bringing pressure from all angles, Ballard's new corps of linebackers — Jabaal Sheard, John Simon, Sean Spence and Barkevious Mingo — will have to produce. This quartet combined for 11.5 sacks last season, highlighted by Sheard's five with the Patriots.

Cornerback Patrick Robinson proved to be a one-year waste of time and money as the cover guy typically picked on by quarterbacks wanting to avoid two-time Pro Bowler Vontae Davis. And the free-agent departure of two-time Pro Bowl safety Mike Adams means Ballard still has some work to do in tinkering with the secondary. Malik Hooker, a first-round pick out of Ohio State, will be expected to start right away at one safety spot. Quincy Wilson, a second rounder from Florida, will be in the mix at cornerback.

SPECIALISTS If there was another offseason shocker, aside from Luck having surgery, it was the sudden retirement of punter Pat McAfee, a two-time Pro Bowler and one-time All-Pro who decided after eight years to become a standup comedian. McAfee was continually one of the best at kickoff touchbacks and at pinning opponents inside the 20, and he also provided perfect holds for placekicker Adam Vinatieri. Irsay tried to talk McAfee into returning, but to no avail. A third knee operation in four seasons had the specialist thinking it was time to walk away while he still could. The Colts signed former Minnesota punter Jeff Locke, whose 42.6-yard average is well off McAfee's career-best 49.3 yards in 2016. But Locke had 34 punts downed inside the 20, 15 more than McAfee.

Vinatieri, the NFL's oldest player at 44, insisted on a two-year contract when he was retained before 2016. "Mr. Clutch" showed he still had the leg from 50-plus yards in converting 7-of-9 attempts from long range. He made 27-of-31 overall.

FINAL ANALYSIS NFL general managers want to shop for their own proverbial groceries, and they expect to be doing so with a head coach of their choosing. Then again, Irsay's insistence on keeping Pagano for one more year might not set the franchise back too much because Ballard has too many holes to fill and can use a season to familiarize himself with the organization.

But presuming the Colts are mired in mediocrity for a third consecutive season, it's more important to pay close attention to how quickly Ballard can fix these issues. As much as the Colts need pass rushers — who in the NFL doesn't? — the No. 1 frustration since Luck was drafted in 2012 has been subjecting No. 12 to continual pounding. If Ballard accomplishes nothing else in 2017, he must ensure that the Colts' cornerstone player can be kept upright and have a chance to play another five years, if not more. At this pace, Luck's body can't hold up for that long.

The new GM deserves credit for grabbing mostly good-but-not-great young blood to try to raise the level of performance in obviously weak positions. Factor in a solid draft or two, and the Colts aren't that far away from returning as a perennial playoff contender.

When Irsay was justifying his decision to fire Grigson — and reluctantly admitting that his team needed a new direction — the owner said he would rather have a lousy year or two to set up a long-term contender than to be consistently mediocre. The Colts have been the latter for two years. That begs this question: Do they need to endure a lousy year of growing pains in 2017 before they can become contenders in 2018?

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN COLTS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
12 Luck, Andrew	QB	6-4	240	5	Stanford	D1-12	D1-Ind-12
7 Morris, Stephen	QB	6-2	218	1	Miami	FA-15	FA-Jac-14
16 Tolzien, Scott	QB	6-2	213	6	Wisconsin	FA-GB-16	FA-LAC-11
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
34 Ferguson, Josh	RB	5-10	200	1	Illinois	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
23 Gore, Frank	RB	5-9	217	12	Miami	FA-SF-15	D3a-SF-05
33 Turbin, Robert	RB	5-10	225	5	Utah State	FA-Dal-16	D4a-Sea-12
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
49 Alie-Cox, Mo	TE	6-7	250	R	VCU	FA-17	FA-Ind-17
1 Aiken, Kamar	WR	6-2	215	4	UCF	FA-Bal-17	FA-Buf-11
11 Bray, Quan	WR	5-10	186	2	Auburn	FA-15	FA-Ind-15
15 Dorsett, Phillip	WR	5-10	185	2	Miami	D1-15	D1-Ind-15
84 Doyle, Jack	TE	6-6	267	4	Western Kentucky	W-Ten-13	FA-Ten-13
13 Hilton, T.Y.	WR	5-9	180	5	FIU	D3-12	D3-Ind-12
14 Leak, Marcus	WR	6-0	210	1	Maryland	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
85 Miller, Mike	TE	6-6	255	1	Taylor	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
10 Moncrief, Donte	WR	6-2	222	3	Ole Miss	D3-14	D3-Ind-14
80 Rogers, Chester	WR	6-1	180	1	Grambling State	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
17 Smith, Tevaun	WR	6-2	205	1	Iowa	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
86 Swoope, Erik	TE	6-5	257	1	Miami	FA-14	FA-Ind-14
85 Williams, Brandon	TE	6-3	247	4	Oregon	FA-Sea-17	FA-Car-13
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
63 Blythe, Austin	C	6-3	298	1	Iowa	D7-16	D7-Ind-16
60 Cage, Isiah	G	6-5	312	1	Wisconsin-E. Claire	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
74 Castonzo, Anthony	T	6-7	311	6	Boston College	D1-11	D1-Ind-11
62 Clark, Le'Raven	T/G	6-5	319	1	Texas Tech	D3-16	D3-Ind-16
64 Cooper, Fahn	T	6-5	306	1	Ole Miss	FA-17	D5-SF-16
71 Good, Denzelle	T/G	6-5	355	2	Mars Hill	D7-15	D7-Ind-15
73 Haeg, Joe	T	6-6	304	1	North Dakota St.	D5-16	D5-Ind-16
78 Kelly, Ryan	C	6-4	313	1	Alabama	D1-16	D1-Ind-16
75 Mewhort, Jack	T/G	6-6	312	3	Ohio State	D2-14	D2-Ind-14
61 Redmond, Adam	G	6-6	290	1	Harvard	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
66 Schwenke, Brian	OL	6-3	318	4	California	FA-Ten-17	D4-Ten-13
67 Vujnovich, Jeremy	T	6-5	300	1	Louisiana College	FA-16	FA-GB-14
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
96 Anderson, Henry	DT	6-6	300	2	Stanford	D3-15	D3-Ind-15
95 Hankins, Johnathan	DT	6-2	320	4	Ohio State	FA-NYG-17	D2-NYG-13
94 Hunt, Margus	DL	6-8	295	4	SMU	FA-Cin-17	D2b-Cin-13
90 Langford, Kendall	DE	6-6	305	9	Hampton	FA-15	D3-Mia-08
99 McGill, T.Y.	DT	6-0	310	2	NC State	W-Sea-15	FA-Sea-15
54 Parry, David	DT	6-2	310	2	Stanford	D5-15	D5-Ind-15
91 Ridgeway, Hassan	DT	6-3	317		Texas	D4-16	D4-Ind-16
65 Sokoli, Kristjan	DE	6-5	300	2	Buffalo	FA-16	D6-Sea-15
97 Woods, Al	DL	6-4	307	7	LSU	FA-Ten-17	D4-NO-10
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
56 Ayers, Akeem	OLB	6-3	255	6	UCLA	FA-16	D2-Ten-11
57 Bostic, Jon	LB	6-1	242	4	Florida	FA-Det-17	D2-Chi-13
95 Edwards, Lavar	OLB	6-4	275	4	LSU	W-Car-16	D5-Ten-13
53 Jackson, Edwin	ILB	6-0	230	1	Georgia Southern	FA-15	FA-Ari-15
92 Maggitt, Curt	OLB	6-3	250	1	Tennessee	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
52 Mingo, Barkevious	OLB	6-4	240	4	LSU	FA-NE-17	D1-Cle-13
44 Morrison, Antonio	ILB	6-1	235	1	Florida	D4-16	D4-Ind-16
48 Mount, Deiontrez	OLB	6-5	249	2	Louisville	FA-16	D6-Ten-15
46 Rhodes, Luke	ILB	6-2	242	1	William & Mary	FA-16	FA-TB-16
93 Sheard, Jabaal	OLB	6-3	265	6	Pittsburgh	FA-NE-17	D2a-Cle-11
51 Simon, John	OLB	6-1	260	4	Ohio State	FA-Hou-17	D4-Bal-13
55 Spence, Sean	ILB	5-11	231	3	Miami	FA-17	D3-Pit-12
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
20 Butler, Darius	DB	5-10	188	8	Connecticut	FA-12	D2-NE-09
21 Davis, Vontae	CB	5-11	207	8	Illinois	T-Mia-12	D1-Mia-09
41 Farley, Matthias	S	5-11	210	1	Notre Dame	W-Ari-16	FA-Ari-16
26 Geathers, Clayton	S	6-2	220	2	UCF	D4-15	D4-Ind-15
32 Green, T.J.	S	6-3	205	1	Clemson	D2-16	D2-Ind-16
30 Melvin, Rashaan	CB	6-2	193	4	Northern Illinois	FA-16	FA-TB-13
40 Milton, Christopher	CB	5-11	190	1	Georgia Tech	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
27 Mitchel, Tevin	CB	6-0	190	2	Arkansas	W-Was-15	FA-Was-15
35 Morris, Darryl	CB	5-10	188	4	Texas State	FA-16	FA-SF-13
37 Williams, Frankie	CB	5-9	190	1	Purdue	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
36 Williamson, Andrew	S	6-1	212	1	Vanderbilt	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
9 Locke, Jeff	P	6-0	195	3	UCLA	FA-Min-17	D5-Min-13
45 Overton, Matt	LS	6-1	243	5	Western Washington	FA-12	FA-Sea-07
4 Vinatieri, Adam	K	6-0	206	21	South Dakota St.	FA-NE-06	FA-NE-96

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	10	Donte Moncrief	1	Kamar Aiken
WR	13	T.Y. Hilton	15	Phillip Dorsett
LT	74	Anthony Castonzo	62	Le'Raven Clark
LG	75	Jack Mewhort	62	Le'Raven Clark
C	78	Ryan Kelly	63	Austin Blythe
RG	71	Denzelle Good	66	Brian Schwenke
RT	73	Joe Haeg	72	Zach Banner (R)
TE	86	Erik Swoope	85	Brandon Williams
TE	84	Jack Doyle	49	Mo Alie-Cox (R)
QB	12	Andrew Luck	16	Scott Tolzien
RB	23	Frank Gore	33	Robert Turbin

DEFENSE

DE	90	Kendall Langford	96	Henry Anderson
NT	95	Johnathan Hankins	97	Al Woods
DT	94	Margus Hunt	91	Hassan Ridgeway
OLB	93	Jabaal Sheard	58	Tarell Basham (R)
ILB	44	Antonio Morrison	59	Curt Maggitt
ILB	55	Sean Spence	57	Jon Bostic
OLB	51	John Simon	52	Barkevious Mingo
CB	30	Rashaan Melvin	31	Quincy Wilson (R)
CB	21	Vontae Davis	20	Darius Butler
S	29	Malik Hooker (R)	20	Darius Butler
S	26	Clayton Geathers	32	T.J. Green

SPECIALISTS

K	4	Adam Vinatieri	KR	11	Quan Bray
P	9	Jeff Locke	PR	11	Quan Bray

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
LB	Jon Bostic	Detroit
NT	Johnathan Hankins	N.Y. Giants
DE	Margus Hunt	Cincinnati
P	Jeff Locke	Minnesota
LB	Barkevious Mingo	New England
C/G	Brian Schwenke	Tennessee
LB	Jabaal Sheard	New England
LB	John Simon	Houston
LB	Sean Spence	Tennessee
NT	Al Woods	Tennessee

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
S	Mike Adams	Carolina
TE	Dwayne Allen	New England
LB	Trent Cole	Free Agent
LB	D'Qwell Jackson	Free Agent
DT	Arthur Jones	Free Agent
LB	Robert Mathis	Retired
P	Pat McAfee	Retired
OG	Joe Reitz	Retired
CB	Patrick Robinson	Philadelphia
LB	Erik Walden	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE COLTS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP INDIANAPOLIS "The media and fans ridicule Jim Irsay, but the people within the Colts' program not only respect him, but admire his football acumen. ... The reality for this team is that Andrew Luck has been injured since 2015, and the defense could not make a play to save its life during that time. ... Luck had offseason shoulder surgery and is expected to return by training camp. The organization still believes he is capable of leading them to multiple Super Bowls, but he has to play better and cut down on his turnovers. ... Opposing coaches marvel at the career Frank Gore has put together. He still runs with a forward lean, great instincts and finishes every play. ... They should be set at receiver with T.Y. Hilton leading the way and Donte Moncrief showing signs of being a solid No. 2. ... The offensive line has stabilized with Ryan Kelly at center and should be better with more experience. It's still not a strength. ... Ballard paid $30 million over three years to defensive tackle Johnathan Hankins in early April, which might prove to be the best of his 14 free-agent signings. ... Ohio State free safety Malik Hooker was their first-round pick, and he is a rangy center fielder with exceptional ball skills. ... Punter Pat McAfee retired and blasted [former general manager] Ryan Grigson on his way out the door. Jeff Locke was signed from the Vikings to fill his role."

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

COLTS IN THE *DRAFT*

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Malik Hooker	S	6-1	206	Ohio State
2.	Quincy Wilson	CB	6-1	213	Florida
3.	Tarell Basham	LB	6-4	262	Ohio
4.	Zach Banner	OT	6-8	353	USC
4.	Marlon Mack	RB	5-11	210	USF
4.	Grover Stewart	DT	6-5	295	Albany State
5.	Nate Hairston	CB	6-0	196	Temple
5.	Anthony Walker	LB	6-1	245	Northwestern

New general manager Chris Ballard didn't try to hide his surprise that Malik Hooker was still available when the Colts were on the clock with the 15th overall pick. Hooker dropped, presumably, because of hip surgery. But the Colts are confident he'll be ready to go for the season opener. Hooker's ball-hawk skills have been compared, albeit optimistically, to Ed Reed's. Quincy Wilson could also join Hooker in the starting lineup for Week 1. His size and strength make him suitable to play press coverage. Ballard had to address the pass rush in the draft, hence the addition of Tarell Basham, who is not only making a jump from the Mid-American Conference but also switching from a 4-3 defensive end with his hand in the ground to a 3-4 outside linebacker who will stand up. Zach Banner will have a chance to play right away at right tackle. Marlon Mack rushed for more than 1,000 yards in all three seasons at USF, averaging a career-high 6.8 yards per carry in 2016. Grover Stewart recorded 23.5 sacks in his career at Division II Albany State.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

OLD MAN The NFL's oldest player isn't just going strong — 44-year-old Adam Vinatieri is accepting his gray hairs. The 22-year pro showed up for OTAs with a gray beard and joked about how he should land a "Just for Men" endorsement. Although "Mr. Clutch" is in a contract year, don't be surprised if he keeps on kicking beyond 2017. "I still think I can help our team win games," Vinatieri says. "Why not keep going?"

WHAT SIMON SAYS After facing the Colts for three seasons with AFC South rival Houston, linebacker John Simon kids that embracing his new teammates as brothers isn't easy. "Well, I definitely know the offense here, and I've known to hate these guys, so it's hard trying to be friends with them," Simon says. After a pause, he concedes, "No, they're good guys."

STUDYING CUBS New Colts GM Chris Ballard likes to read on his phone in the midnight hours. He's particularly enjoyed "The Cubs Way" in iBook form on how Chicago Cubs president of baseball operations Theo Epstein built the 2016 World Champions that ended a 108-year title drought. "I'm a big night-time reader," Ballard says. "Unfortunately, it cuts into my sleep."

MCAFEE HAMMERS GRIGSON The offseason firing of GM Ryan Grigson prompted retiring punter Pat McAfee, who is never shy about sharing opinions, to tweet "Thank God" and then "'Unwarranted arrogance' just ran into a brick wall called karma."

LUCK MADE CALL Quarterback Andrew Luck said it was his decision to finally have offseason shoulder surgery to repair a torn labrum, an injury suffered in 2015. "I made this decision with what I felt like was the best information that we could all find, that I could find," Luck said at the outset of offseason training activities. "I have no regrets about going to get surgery."

EASIEST SCHEDULE? Based on last season's records, the Colts' 2017 opponents have a .424 winning percentage, which in theory makes their slate the NFL's easiest. The Colts have five games against teams with four or fewer wins a year ago — Cleveland (1–15), San Francisco (2–14), the L.A. Rams (4–12) and two division games against Jacksonville (3–13). Conversely, the Colts play just two teams that won at least 10 games last season, Pittsburgh (11–5) and Seattle (10–5-1).

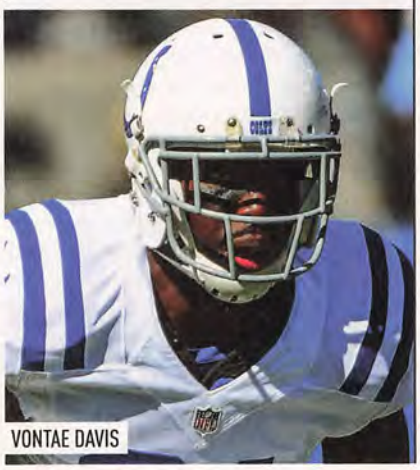
UNDRAFTED KEEPER Four seasons after being cut by Tennessee, former undrafted tight end Jack Doyle has become a permanent fit with his hometown Colts. A reliable blocker whose pass-catching skills have continually improved, Doyle was rewarded with a three-year, $19 million contract that includes $2 million in incentives. The Indianapolis native caught a career-high 59 passes for 584 yards and five touchdowns last season, and an offseason trade of Dwayne Allen makes Doyle the Colts' No. 1 tight end.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

13 A league-low 13 percent of the Colts' runs were stopped at or behind the line of scrimmage.

7.6 The Colts tied for last in the league in broken tackles as an offense, creating them on just 7.6 percent of offensive plays.

15 Indianapolis finished last in the NFL in pressure rate as a defense, getting pressure on the opposing quarterback on just 15 percent of passing snaps.



VONTAE DAVIS

JACKSONVILLE JAGUARS

AFC SOUTH FORECAST

4

There is a new sheriff prowling the halls of the Jacksonville Jaguars' facility, and it is the same man who helped lead the franchise into the NFL more than two decades ago and to the cusp of the Super Bowl after the 1996 and '99 seasons. Tom Coughlin was hired in January by owner Shad Khan to resuscitate the entire organization — just not as the head coach. Coughlin's title is executive vice president of football operations, and he has final say on roster decisions, taking that responsibility away from GM Dave Caldwell. Doug Marrone, the offensive line coach from 2015-16, was promoted to head coach.

Does Coughlin still have the touch? Although the Jaguars were busy in free agency, signing three starters and multiple role players, the success of this season will rest largely on players Coughlin inherited, chiefly quarterback Blake Bortles. A total bust or ready for a boon? For as impressive as the defense looks — led by second-year cornerback Jalen Ramsey and newcomers A.J. Bouye, Calais Campbell and Barry Church — if the Jaguars are unable to score more points, Coughlin's return will not equal a return to relevance for the Jaguars.

OFFENSE Since 2008, when the Jags' current playoff drought began, their 18.3 points-per-game average is third worst in the NFL. And since 2012, a year after Maurice Jones-Drew won the rushing title, the Jaguars' per-game rushing average of 92.1 yards is the league's worst. The Jaguars are counting on Leonard Fournette — who rushed for 3,830 yards in three seasons at LSU — to impact both categories. The Jaguars selected Fournette fourth overall, and running backs taken that high have turned into Barry Sanders and Marshall Faulk — but also Trent Richardson and Darren McFadden.

A one-man wrecking crew since he was in high school, Fournette will have to do the Jaguars' heavy lifting, because Bortles proved last year he wasn't ready for that task. Bortles had his 2018 contract option picked up on May 1, but it is guaranteed only for injury, meaning this remains his make-or-break season. If he wants to remain the Jaguars' starter beyond this year, he must commit fewer turnovers (51 interceptions in 46 games) and be more accurate (58.8 career completion percentage). The Jaguars didn't draft a quarterback, which can be viewed as a vote of confidence or a sign Coughlin is merely waiting until 2018 to take one.

The Jaguars believe they have provided Bortles with ample weapons. Now entering their fourth year, receivers Allen Robinson, Allen Hurns and Marqise Lee have shown flashes of consistent play, just not at the same time. Robinson and Hurns eclipsed 1,000 yards in 2015, but their numbers dipped because of extra attention (Robinson) and injuries (Hurns). Lee hasn't been able to use his speed to stretch the field. Although they enter as the top three receivers, rookie Dede Westbrook could become an option operating from the slot. After a rather ordinary junior season at Oklahoma — his first after transferring from junior college — Westbrook exploded for 80 catches for 1,524 yards and 17 touchdowns as a senior. His 19.1-yard average was the best in college football for players with at least 75 catches.

Getting more production from the tight ends would help matters on the outside. The Julius Thomas experiment failed, and he was shipped to Miami in exchange for a seventh-round pick. The Jaguars want their tight ends to be equally effective as receivers and blockers. Marcedes Lewis, the longest-tenured Jaguar with 11 seasons of service, checks the blocking box, and the team believes that former Raider Mychal Rivera can be an efficient receiver.

Along the offensive line, there are issues. Again. Branden Albert will the third left tackle in as many years. The Jaguars drafted Cam Robinson — a three-year starter at Alabama — in the second round to eventually replace Albert, but moving him to guard could be their top option this year. Center Brandon Linder is their best lineman, but the right side of guard A.J. Cann and tackle Jermey Parnell must be better this year. Neither missed a snap in 2016, but they did miss plenty of blocks.

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/CEO: Shahid Khan
PRESIDENT: Mark Lamping
EXECUTIVE VP FOOTBALL OPERATIONS: Tom Coughlin
GENERAL MANAGER: David Caldwell
STADIUM: EverBank Field (64,4281)
SURFACE: Tifway 419 Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.jaguars.com
TICKETS: 904-633-2000
TRAINING CAMP: EverBank Field (Jacksonville, Fla.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Doug Marrone
RECORD WITH TEAM: 1–1
CAREER RECORD: 16–18
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Nathaniel Hackett
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Todd Wash
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Joe DeCamillis
QUARTERBACKS: Scott Milanovich
RUNNING BACKS: Tyrone Wheatley
WIDE RECEIVERS: Keenan McCardell
TIGHT ENDS: Ron Middleton
OFFENSIVE LINE: Pat Flaherty
DEFENSIVE LINE: Marion Hobby
LINEBACKERS: Mark Collins
SECONDARY: Perry Fewell

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	at Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Sept. 17	Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Sept. 24	vs. Baltimore (London)	9:30 am	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Oct. 1	at N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Oct. 8	at Pittsburgh	1:00	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Oct. 15	L.A. Rams	4:05	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Oct. 22	at Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
BYE							
Nov. 5	Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Nov. 12	L.A. Chargers	1:00	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Nov. 19	at Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Nov. 26	at Arizona	4:25	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Dec. 3	Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Dec. 10	Seattle	1:00	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Dec. 17	Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Dec. 24	at San Francisco	4:05	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Dec. 31	at Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

CB JALEN RAMSEY

2016 RESULTS (3-13)

Sept. 11	Green Bay	L	23-27
Sept. 18	at L.A. Chargers	L	14-38
Sept. 25	Baltimore	L	17-19
Oct. 2	Indianapolis	W	30-27
Oct. 16	at Chicago	W	17-16
Oct. 23	Oakland	L	16-33
Oct. 27	at Tennessee	L	22-36
Nov. 6	at Kansas City	L	14-19
Nov. 13	Houston	L	21-24
Nov. 20	at Detroit	L	19-26
Nov. 27	at Buffalo	L	21-28
Dec. 4	Denver	L	10-20
Dec. 11	Minnesota	L	16-25
Dec. 18	at Houston	L	20-21
Dec. 24	Tennessee	W	38-17
Jan. 1	at Indianapolis	L	20-24

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Blake Bortles	625	368	3,905	23	16
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
T.J. Yeldon	130	465	3.6	1	
Chris Ivory	117	439	3.8	3	
Blake Bortles	58	359	6.2	3	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Allen Robinson	73	883	12.1	6	
Marqise Lee	63	851	13.5	3	
T.J. Yeldon	50	312	6.2	1	
Allen Hurns	35	477	13.6	3	
Julius Thomas	30	281	9.4	4	
Bryan Walters	24	231	9.6	2	

KICKING: Jason Myers, 27-34 FGs, 29-32 PAT, 110 points
TACKLES: Paul Posluszny, 133; Johnathan Cyprien, 127
SACKS: Yannick Ngakoue, 8.0; Malik Jackson, 6.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Jalen Ramsey, 2; Telvin Smith, 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	334.9	23	11
Rushing	101.9	22	12
Passing	233.0	20	9
Scoring	19.9	25	13
Third Down %	35.3	29	15
Punt Returns	5.5	T31	T15
Kick Returns	23.8	T7	4

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	321.7	6	3
Rushing	106.4	19	8
Passing	215.2	5	3
Scoring	25.0	25	13
Interceptions	7	32	16
Sacks	33	T19	T7
Turnover Differential	-16	30	15

ALLEN ROBINSON

DEFENSE At least the Jaguars didn't fall in love with some of their misleading 2016 stats and stand pat defensively. Coordinator Todd Wash was retained, but myriad other changes occurred: Five new assistant coaches, new starters in Campbell (strong-side end), Church (strong safety) and Bouye (cornerback), as well as Myles Jack's move to middle linebacker.

The Jaguars tied for 19th in the NFL with 33 sacks; their seven interceptions were fewest in the NFL; and their 12 completions allowed of at least 40 yards tied for fifth most. It was a defense that was unable to generate consistent pressure on the quarterback, take the football away or prevent the explosive play downfield. The Jaguars spent accordingly.

Up front, free agency and the draft have helped overhaul the line. Among the top eight linemen, only nose tackle Abry Jones played for the Jaguars before 2016. Added since then are Dante Fowler, Yannick Ngakoue, Sheldon Day and Dawuane Smoot in the draft and Campbell, Malik Jackson and Stefan Charles via free agency. Wash wants two-platoon depth, and the Jaguars have achieved that. Ngakoue, the starting weak-side end, led the team with eight sacks. His production could increase if Campbell — when he slides from end to tackle — and Jackson form a solid interior pass rush.

The Jaguars' starting linebackers will be the same as the end of last year, but Jack is now in the middle and veteran Paul Posluszny was moved to the strong side — and his playing time is expected to be greatly reduced. Jack showed his lights-out athleticism last year in run pursuit and coverage, but the Jaguars played him on only 25 percent of the snaps, unwilling to take Posluszny off the field. Telvin Smith remains at the weak-side spot and must reduce his missed tackle total (team-high 26 last year).

Half of the Jaguars' secondary is new. Bouye, following a breakout year in Houston, was one of the game's top free agents, and the Jaguars poached him from their division rivals. Bouye will team with Ramsey to give the Jaguars one of the top cornerback duos in the league. Aaron Colvin is the favorite to play nickel, but Ramsey could also cover the slot receiver depending on the matchup. Tashaun Gipson returns as the free safety after a disappointing debut season marked by too many missed tackles and not enough takeaways. Church, the former Cowboy, was signed to replace Johnathan Cyprien, who was allowed leave via free agency. He signed with AFC South rival Tennessee.

The major change Wash will make to the scheme is having Church and Gipson be interchangeable, which will allow the Jaguars to be less predictable.

SPECIALISTS The Jaguars needed to do something to improve a special teams unit that committed 30 penalties last year (at least one in 15 of 16 games), allowed 12.5 yards per punt return and rarely flipped the field. New coordinator Joe DeCamillis, most recently with Denver and in his second tour with the Jaguars, was lured back to Jacksonville due to Coughlin's commitment to special teams.

Placekicker Jason Myers, punter Brad Nortman and long snapper Carson Tinker return in the same roles, but many faces will be new. The Jaguars signed Audie Cole, Josh McNary and Lerentee McCray in free agency and drafted Westbrook, Blair Brown, Jalen Myrick, and Marquez Williams in an effort to find some core special teams players. The Jaguars need to get more positive game-changing plays in the kicking game.

FINAL ANALYSIS Starting with the 2009 season, the Jaguars are 7–24 in September, a .226 winning percentage that is worst in the league. Slow starts have led to draft talk in November, coaching changes in January and roster overhauls in March. If Fournette can lead the offense and the defense jells quickly, the Jaguars could finally start quickly and develop a buzz that has been lacking. But their streak of non-winning seasons will reach a full decade because the offensive line won't be able to protect Bortles well enough and the defense still doesn't produce enough of a pass rush.

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN JAGUARS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
10 Allen, Brandon	QB	6-2	219	1	Arkansas	D6b-16	D6b-Jac-16
5 Bortles, Blake	QB	6-5	239	3	UCF	D1-14	D1-Jac-14
7 Henne, Chad	QB	6-3	219	9	Michigan	FA-Mia-12	D2b-Mia-08
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
40 Bohanon, Tom	FB	6-1	247	3	Wake Forest	FA-17	D7-NYJ-13
30 Grant, Corey	RB	5-11	204	2	Auburn	FA-15	FA-Jac-15
33 Ivory, Chris	RB	6-0	224	7	Tiffin	FA-NYJ-16	FA-NO-10
24 Yeldon, T.J.	RB	6-1	226	2	Alabama	D2-15	D2-Jac-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
17 Benn, Arrelious	WR	6-2	222	6	Illinois	FA-16	D2-TB-10
14 Blackmon, Justin	WR	6-1	210	2	Oklahoma State	D1-12	D1-Jac-12
48 Ellis, Alex	TE	6-4	253	1	Tennessee	FA-16	FA-Ten-16
13 Greene, Rashad	WR	5-11	182	2	Florida State	D5-15	D5-Jac-15
88 Hurns, Allen	WR	6-3	201	3	Miami	FA-14	FA-Jac-14
83 Koyack, Ben	TE	6-5	269	1	Notre Dame	D7-15	D7-Jac-15
11 Lee, Marqise	WR	6-0	200	3	USC	D2-14	D2-Jac-14
89 Lewis, Marcedes	TE	6-6	272	11	UCLA	D1-06	D1-Jac-06
18 Pinkard, Larry	WR	6-0	196	1	Old Dominion	FA-17	FA-GB-15
80 Rivera, Mychal	TE	6-3	245	4	Tennessee	FA-Oak-17	D6c-Oak-13
15 Robinson, Allen	WR	6-3	218	3	Penn State	D2a-14	D2a-Jac-14
87 Sterling, Neal	TE	6-4	254	2	Monmouth	D7a-15	D7a-Jac-15
81 Walters, Bryan	WR	6-0	195	5	Cornell	FA-16	FA-SD-10
14 Wynn, Shane	WR	5-6	159	1	Indiana	FA-16	FA-Atl-15
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
76 Albert, Branden	T	6-5	314	9	Virginia	T-Mia-17	D1b-KC-08
70 Bowanko, Luke	OL	6-6	306	3	Virginia	D6-14	D6-Jac-14
60 Cann, A.J.	G	6-3	317	2	South Carolina	D3-15	D3-Jac-15
62 Kasitati, Nila	OL	6-4	315	1	Oklahoma	FA-16	FA-Was-16
65 Linder, Brandon	C	6-6	309	3	Miami	D3-14	D3-Jac-14
77 Omameh, Patrick	G/T	6-4	316	3	Michigan	FA-16	FA-SF-13
78 Parnell, Jermey	T	6-6	323	6	Ole Miss	FA-Dal-15	FA-NO-09
73 Poutasi, Jeremiah	T/G	6-5	335	2	Utah	FA-16	D3-Ten-15
64 Reed, Chris	G	6-5	300	2	Minnesota State	FA-15	FA-Jac-15
69 Shatley, Tyler	OL	6-3	306	3	Clemson	FA-14	FA-Jac-14
68 Watford, Earl	OL	6-3	300	3	James Madison	FA-17	D4-Ari-13
72 Wells, Josh	T	6-6	305	3	James Madison	FA-14	FA-Jac-14
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
96 Bennett, Michael	DT	6-2	293	2	Ohio State	D6-15	D6-Jac-15
93 Campbell, Calais	DE	6-8	300	9	Miami	FA-Ari-17	D2-Ari-08
94 Charles, Stefan	DT	6-5	320	4	Regina	FA-17	FA-Ten-13
92 Day, Sheldon	DT	6-1	285	1	Notre Dame	D4-16	D4-Jac-16
56 Fowler Jr., Dante	DE	6-3	250	2	Florida	D1-15	D1-Jac-15
99 Goodman, Malliciah	DE	6-4	276	5	Clemson	FA-Atl-17	D4a-Atl-13
97 Jackson, Malik	DL	6-5	300	5	Tennessee	FA-Den-16	D5-Den-12
95 Jones, Abry	DT	6-4	318	4	Georgia	FA-13	FA-Jac-13
55 McCray, Lerentee	DE	6-3	249	4	Florida	FA-Buf-17	FA-Den-13
91 Ngakoue, Yannick	DE	6-2	246	1	Maryland	D3-16	D3-Jac-16
74 Nix, Louis	DT	6-2	331	3	Notre Dame	FA-16	D3-Hou-14
66 Woodard, Jonathan	DE	6-5	271	1	Central Arkansas	D7-16	D7-Jac-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
57 Cole, Audie	LB	6'5	248	5	NC State	FA-17	D7-Min-12
44 Jack, Myles	LB	6-1	247	1	UCLA	D2-16	D2-Jac-16
58 Kirby, Raphael	LB	6-0	236	1	Miami	FA-16	FA-Det-16
45 McNary, Josh	LB	6-0	251	3	Army	FA-Ind-17	FA-Ind-13
51 Posluszny, Paul	LB	6-2	232	10	Penn State	FA-Buf-11	D2-Buf-07
52 Pullard III, Hayes	LB	6-0	233	2	USC	PS-Cle-15	D7-Cle-15
54 Rush, Marcus	LB	6-3	251	1	Michigan State	PS-SF-16	FA-SF-15
50 Smith, Telvin	LB	6-3	218	3	Florida State	D5a-14	D5a-Jac-14
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
21 Bouye, A.J.	CB	6-0	190	4	UCF	FA-Hou-17	FA-Hou-13
42 Church, Barry	S	6-2	218	7	Toledo	FA-Dal-17	FA-Dal-10
22 Colvin, Aaron	CB	6-0	195	3	Oklahoma	D4-14	D4-Jac-14
35 Davis, Akeem	CB	6-1	200	3	Memphis	FA-16	FA-Was-14
39 Gipson, Tashaun	S	5-11	210	5	Wyoming	FA-Cle-16	FA-Cle-12
26 Grant, Doran	CB	5-10	200	2	Ohio State	FA-16	D4-Pit-14
36 Howard, Tracy	CB	5-10	185	1	Miami	W-Cle-17	FA-Cle-16
29 Johnson, Josh	CB	5-10	195	1	Purdue	FA-16	FA-SD-13
20 Ramsey, Jalen	CB	6-2	211	1	Florida State	D1-16	D1-Jac-16
23 Sample, James	S	6-2	209	2	Louisville	D4-15	D4-Jac-15
25 Thompson, Peyton	S	5-10	189	2	San Jose State	FA-14	FA-Atl-12
47 Wilson, Jarrod	S	6-2	209	1	Michigan	FA-16	FA-Jac-16
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
2 Myers, Jason	K	5-10	195	2	Marist	FA-15	FA-Jac-15
3 Nortman, Brad	P	6-2	218	5	Wisconsin	FA-Car-16	D6-Car-12
46 Tinker, Carson	LS	6-0	239	4	Alabama	FA-13	FA-Jac-13

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	15	Allen Robinson	17	Arrelious Benn
WR	11	Marqise Lee	13	Rashad Greene
WR	88	Allen Hurns	12	Dede Westbrook (R)
LT	76	Branden Albert	75	Cam Robinson (R)
LG	77	Patrick Omameh	68	Earl Watford
C	65	Brandon Linder	69	Tyler Shatley
RG	60	A.J. Cann	73	Jeremiah Poutasi
RT	78	Jermey Parnell	70	Luke Bowanko
TE	89	Marcedes Lewis	80	Mychal Rivera
QB	5	Blake Bortles	7	Chad Henne
RB	27	Leonard Fournette (R)	24	T.J. Yeldon

DEFENSE

DE	91	Yannick Ngakoue	56	Dante Fowler
DT	97	Malik Jackson	94	Stefan Charles
DT	95	Abry Jones	92	Sheldon Day
DE	93	Calais Campbell	94	Dawuane Smoot (R)
WLB	50	Telvin Smith	53	Blair Brown (R)
MLB	44	Myles Jack	57	Audie Cole
SLB	51	Paul Posluszny	45	Josh McNary
CB	20	Jalen Ramsey	22	Aaron Colvin
CB	21	A.J. Bouye	29	Josh Johnson
FS	39	Tashaun Gipson	25	Peyton Thompson
SS	42	Barry Church	23	James Sample

SPECIALISTS

K	2	Jason Myers	KR	11	Marqise Lee
P	3	Brad Nortman	PR	13	Rashad Greene

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
OT	Branden Albert	Miami
CB	A.J. Bouye	Houston
DE	Calais Campbell	Arizona
DT	Stefan Charles	Detroit
SS	Barry Church	Dallas
LB	Audie Cole	Minnesota
LB	Josh McNary	Indianapolis
TE	Mychal Rivera	Oakland
OG	Earl Watford	Arizona

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
DE	Tyson Alualu	Pittsburgh
CB	Prince Amukamara	Chicago
OT	Kelvin Beachum	N.Y. Jets
CB	Davon House	Green Bay
OT	Luke Joeckel	Seattle
DT	Sen'Derrick Marks	Free Agent
DT	Roy Miller	Free Agent
DE	Jared Odrick	Free Agent
LB	Dan Skuta	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE JAGUARS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP JACKSONVILLE "Their obvious problem is Blake Bortles and a subpar offensive line. This is a make-or-break year for Bortles, who must prove that he can play effectively early in games rather than just building stats in garbage time. ... They jumped all over Leonard Fournette at pick No. 4 with the belief he can make an immediate impact. ... They traded for left tackle Branden Albert to protect Bortles' blindside and chose Cam Robinson in the second round as a possible tackle or guard. ... The Jags traded tight end Julius Thomas to Miami and added Mychal Rivera (Raiders) to complement Marcedes Lewis. ... Allen Robinson and Allen Hurns fell off in 2016 due to injuries and defenses adjusting to their styles, so they both need to respond in their respective fourth seasons. ... Tom Coughlin continued the Jaguars' willingness to spend big in free agency when they added defensive end Calais Campbell and cornerback A.J. Bouye. ... On paper, this side of the football has vast potential, but they must create more pressure to increase their interception production. ... With Bouye and Jalen Ramsey on the corners and veteran safeties Tashaun Gipson and Barry Church patrolling the middle of the field, the Jaguars should be comfortable in building eight-man fronts and blitzing when necessary. ... Everything is riding on Bortles, and everyone in the league knows it, so the scrutiny will be unrelenting from opening day."

JAGUARS IN THE *DRAFT* B-

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Leonard Fournette	RB	6-0	228	LSU
2.	Cam Robinson	OT	6-6	320	Alabama
3.	Dawuane Smoot	DE	6-3	264	Illinois
4.	Dede Westbrook	WR	6-0	178	Oklahoma
5.	Blair Brown	LB	6-0	238	Ohio
7.	Jalen Myrick	CB	5-11	200	Minnesota
7.	Marquez Williams	FB	5-11	260	Miami (Fla.)

The Jaguars deserve high marks for their first two selections. Leonard Fournette, the team's first first-round tailback since Fred Taylor in 1999, will immediately step in and be the offense's featured player and add a physical edge the entire franchise has lacked for years. Cam Robinson will eventually play left tackle, but if he doesn't win a competition with veteran Branden Albert, moving inside to guard could be an option. Over the final five rounds, though, the Jaguars ignored quarterback, offensive line, tight end and pass rusher. Dauwane Smoot's numbers dipped as a senior for the Illini, but the Jaguars needed strong-side defensive end depth. Dede Westbrook fell into the fourth round because of character concerns, and it was a puzzling pick since the Jaguars felt that they were already flush with receivers. Blair Brown will likely be limited to special teams, and Jalen Myrick needs to beat out Josh Johnson for the back-up nickel back role. Marquez Williams has a chance to stick since the Jaguars could keep two fullbacks.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

POZ ON THE MOVE A constant for the Jaguars since 2011 — besides losing 10-plus games and drafting in the top 10 — has been middle linebacker Paul Posluszny, who had more than 100 tackles in four of his first six years with the team. But the Jaguars, desiring more speed on the field, moved Posluszny to strong-side linebacker, opening the door for second-year man Myles Jack to play in the middle. Posluszny, in the final year of his contract, is likely a two-down player and called the position change, "the biggest challenge of my career."

FINDING A GROOVE Dante Fowler was the third overall pick in the 2015 draft, as the Jaguars selected him over Leonard Williams, Amari Cooper and Vic Beasley — three players who went in the top 10. Fowler's rookie year ended in mini-camp with a torn ACL. In 2016, he played 570 snaps and was unable to beat out rookie Yannick Ngakoue for the starting spot. Fowler has only four sacks — one solo in the last 14 games — and needs to be more productive in 2017. The Jaguars gave him a non-verbal vote of confidence by not drafting a true pass-rushing end.

FULLBACK IS BACK The Jaguars will have at least one fullback on the roster for the first time since 2014. Former offensive coordinator Greg Olson eliminated the spot from his system, allowing the Jaguars to keep another tight end or tailback. But the Jaguars struggled in short-yardage situations, usually having to move defensive end Tyson Alualu to offense. During the offseason, the Jaguars added two fullbacks, signing veteran Tommy Bohanon and drafting Marquez Williams in the seventh round.

MCCARDELL JOINS STAFF The Jaguars dipped into their past to hire former coach Tom Coughlin as front office chief, and he was instrumental in the hiring of receivers coach Keenan McCardell, one of the best receivers in franchise history (499 catches in six years). McCardell will lead fourth-year receivers Allen Robinson, Allen Hurns and Marqise Lee while also developing rookie Dede Westbrook. McCardell's previous coaching experience consists of two years apiece with the Redskins (2010-11) and the University of Maryland (2014-15).

LONDON CHANGE-UP The Jaguars' agreement to play one "home" game per season at London's Wembley Stadium has reached Year 5. In September, though, the Jaguars will play the week after traveling across the Atlantic. They play Baltimore in Week 3 in London and at the New York Jets in Week 4. The Jaguars are 2-2 in London.

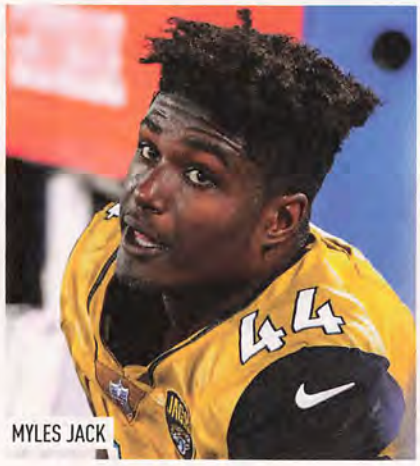
SLUMPING The Jaguars went 40-24 from 2004-07 — highlighted by two trips to the playoffs — but have not had a winning season since. They went 8-8 in 2010, the final full season of the Jack Del Rio era. Since '10, they have not won more than five games in any single season and not finished higher than third place in the AFC South.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

19 A league-high 19 percent of the Jaguars' carries went at right end, more than double the league average.

6.0 Jacksonville forced turnovers on a league-low 6.0 percent of the opponents' drives.

22 Jacksonville's defense faced play-action passes on 22 percent of plays, second-most in the NFL. But they allowed an average of just 6.0 yards on those plays, second best in the league.



MYLES JACK

Fournette: Tom Lynn ; Jack: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

TENNESSEE TITANS

AFC SOUTH FORECAST

1

The Tennessee Titans made great strides in 2016, tripling their win total from a paltry three in 2015 to nine a year ago and very nearly earning the club's first playoff berth since 2008. Now, as they enter 2017, the Titans appear poised to take the next step in the process and contend for the AFC South title. Tennessee has finally found a franchise quarterback in Marcus Mariota, and now general manager Jon Robinson is busy stockpiling weapons around him on offense and upgrading the defense and special teams units that struggled last season.

If the Titans can address their weaknesses from a year ago, stay healthy, and at least maintain the status quo, if not improve, in a few key areas, then a postseason berth could very well be in the offing for Tennessee. If that happens, it would signify that the long rebuilding task has finally been completed.

OFFENSE Mariota built upon his rookie season with an outstanding 2016. He completed 276-of-451 passes for 3,426 yards, making him the first Titan since Matt Hasselbeck in 2011 to top the 3,000-yard mark. His 26 TD passes were most by a franchise quarterback since the team moved to Tennessee 20 years ago. The only downside was that for the second straight year, Mariota was not able to finish the season due to an injury. He broke his right fibula on Christmas Eve, and the injury required a plate to be surgically placed into the leg to help the healing process. Mariota might not do much in OTAs as the Titans will be careful regarding his recovery. Veteran Matt Cassel was re-signed to be the backup.

While the Titans will go as Mariota goes, the running game and the offensive line also has a big say in the team's success. DeMarco Murray came over from Philadelphia and led the AFC in rushing with 1,287 yards while scoring nine touchdowns. Tennessee also has Derrick Henry to bolster the backfield, and the 2015 Heisman Trophy winner added 490 yards and five scores in spot duty behind Murray. That formula should continue in 2017, with Murray being the workhorse and Henry spelling him as a power and short-yardage back.

The Titans overhauled the wide receiver position, spending two of their first three draft picks there. They chose Corey Davis of Western Michigan fifth overall and are hopeful that he can develop into the true No. 1 receiver that has been missing for many years. The Titans also drafted Taywan Taylor, a shifty speedster from Western Kentucky. He replaces the departed Kendall Wright in the slot and has deep route ability. Those two will mix in with Rishard Matthews and Tajae Sharpe to form the core of the unit. Matthews, a free agent from Miami, had a banner season in 2016, catching 65 passes for 945 yards and nine touchdowns. He is ideally a No. 2 receiver but was the top target a year ago. Sharpe started all last season as a rookie fifth-round pick and caught 41 passes. He will have to work hard to stay ahead of Davis and Taylor. Veteran Harry Douglas will need a strong camp to keep his spot.

Tight end Delanie Walker was a Pro Bowler for the second straight season. Walker tied for the team lead with 65 catches and is still going strong at age 33. The Titans drafted his potential long-term replacement in Jonnu Smith, using a third-round pick on a player who had been compared to Walker in draft evaluations. Phillip Supernaw could have a bigger role as a blocker, and the Titans are hoping ex-Jet Jace Amaro will improve his blocking enough to play a bigger role.

Other than perhaps running back, no position group underwent a bigger transformation than the offensive line, which progressed from weak spot in 2015 to major strength last year. Nowhere was that more evident than at tackle, where Taylor Lewan better controlled his emotions and his technique and made the Pro Bowl. Opposite him, last year's first-round pick Jack Conklin was an All-Pro as a rookie. Both those players should be cornerstones for years to come. On the interior, Ben Jones solidified center after arriving from Houston. Jones communicates the line calls and, along with Lewan,

THE ORGANIZATION

CO-CHAIRS, BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Amy Adams Strunk, Susie Adams Smith
PRESIDENT/CEO: Steve Underwood
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/GENERAL MANAGER: Jon Robinson
VP OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION: Vin Marino
STADIUM: Nissan Stadium (69,143)
SURFACE: Tifsport Bermuda Sod
WEBSITE: www.titansonline.com
TICKETS: 615-565-4200
TRAINING CAMP: St. Thomas Sports Park (Nashville, Tenn.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Mike Mularkey
RECORD WITH TEAM: 11–14
CAREER RECORD: 27–46
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Terry Robiskie
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Dick LeBeau
SPECIAL TEAMS: Steve Hoffman
QUARTERBACKS: Jason Michael
RUNNING BACKS: Sylvester Croom
WIDE RECEIVERS: Frisman Jackson
TIGHT ENDS: Arthur Smith
OFFENSIVE LINE: Russ Grimm
DEFENSIVE LINE: Nick Eason
LINEBACKERS: Lou Spanos
SECONDARY: Deshea Townsend

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE / 2016 NFL RANKINGS

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	Oakland	1:00	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Sept. 17	at Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Sept. 24	Seattle	4:05	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Oct. 1	at Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Oct. 8	at Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Oct. 16	Indianapolis (Mon.)	8:30	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Oct. 22	at Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
BYE							
Nov. 5	Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Nov. 12	Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Nov. 16	at Pittsburgh (Thu.)	8:25	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Nov. 26	at Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Dec. 3	Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Dec. 10	at Arizona	4:05	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Dec. 17	at San Francisco	4:25	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Dec. 24	L.A. Rams	1:00	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Dec. 31	Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)

QB MARCUS MARIOTA

2016 RESULTS (9-7)

Sept. 11	Minnesota	L	16-25
Sept. 18	at Detroit	W	16-15
Sept. 25	Oakland	L	10-17
Oct. 2	at Houston	L	20-27
Oct. 9	at Miami	W	30-17
Oct. 16	Cleveland	W	28-26
Oct. 23	Indianapolis	L	26-34
Oct. 27	Jacksonville	W	36-22
Nov. 6	at L.A. Chargers	L	35-43
Nov. 13	Green Bay	W	47-25
Nov. 20	at Indianapolis	L	17-24
Nov. 27	at Chicago	W	27-21
Dec. 11	Denver	W	13-10
Dec. 18	at Kansas City	W	19-17
Dec. 24	at Jacksonville	L	17-38
Jan. 1	Houston	W	24-17

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Marcus Mariota	451	276	3,426	26	9
RUSHING	**ATT**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
DeMarco Murray	293		1,287	4.4	9
Derrick Henry	110		490	4.5	5
Marcus Mariota	60		349	5.8	2
RECEIVING	**REC**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
Rishard Matthews	65		945	14.5	9
Delanie Walker	65		800	12.3	7
DeMarco Murray	53		377	7.1	3
Tajae Sharpe	41		522	12.7	2
Kendall Wright	29		416	14.3	3
Harry Douglas	15		210	14.0	0

KICKING: Ryan Succop, 22-24 FGs, 39-41 PAT, 105 points
TACKLES: Avery Williamson, 104; Jason McCourty, 69
SACKS: Brian Orakpo, 10.5; Derrick Morgan, 9.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Perrish Cox, 3; two players tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	358.0	11	5
Rushing	136.7	3	2
Passing	221.3	25	11
Scoring	23.8	14	8
Third Down %	46.1	3	1
Punt Returns	7.9	20	9
Kick Returns	19.1	26	12

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	357.5	20	11
Rushing	88.3	2	1
Passing	269.2	30	16
Scoring	23.6	T16	T8
Interceptions	12	T18	T10
Sacks	40	T6	2
Turnover Differential	0	T17	10

DEMARCO MURRAY

sets the tone with a physical style. The Titans found gold with undrafted Quinton Spain, who is a strong physical presence at left guard. Waiver pickup Josh Kline stepped in to replace the now-departed Chance Warmack and was solid at right guard. All five starters are back, which bodes well. The primary competition will be at the backup spots, with veterans Dennis Kelly and Tim Lelito battling Sebastian Tretola and rookies Brad Seaton and Corey Levin. The Titans would like Tretola to challenge at right guard.

DEFENSE Defensively, the Titans made strides a year ago, but entering 2017, there is still work to be done. On the line, Jurrell Casey has been to two straight Pro Bowls and does yeoman's work with his ability to gain leverage both against the run and rushing the passer. DaQuan Jones has been solid, if unspectacular, at the other end. In the middle, the Titans booted veteran Al Woods and brought in Sylvester Williams from Denver to replace him. Austin Johnson, a second-round pick last year, figures in the mix both on the nose and at end. End Angelo Blackson got good reviews in 2015 as a rookie but didn't seem to progress as much in Year 2. Veteran Karl Klug comes back from a torn Achilles and is a solid role player. The Titans are also high on Antwaun Woods and Mehdi Abdesmad, both signed as undrafted free agents following the 2016 draft.

The Titans' starting outside linebackers — Pro Bowler Brian Orakpo and Derrick Morgan — combined for 19.5 sacks a year ago. Despite a combined 15 NFL seasons under their belts, they remain a productive tandem who benefit from each other's presence. It is behind them that the Titans have concerns. Kevin Dodd was still struggling with his surgically repaired right foot as offseason work opened. Aaron Wallace held up well as a rookie backup but is more of an edge setter than a pass rusher. On the inside, Avery Williamson isn't the ideal three-down linebacker, but his pass coverage improved. At the other inside spot, Wesley Woodyard is a solid, smart run stopper. With Sean Spence leaving as a free agent, rookie Jayon Brown out of UCLA could spell Woodyard in sub-packages.

Tennessee's secondary was, in a word, terrible last year and has been undergoing an upgrade. Veteran Jason McCourty was cut after battling injuries the past couple of seasons. McCourty's leadership will be missed, but his play had slipped over time. The Titans moved on from Valentino Blake, and the starting corners for 2017 will be two newcomers. Logan Ryan comes over from New England, and first-round pick Adoree' Jackson of USC figures to start on the other side. Both can play inside in the slot as well. The Titans like Ryan's makeup and also the fact that he comes from a winning culture in New England. Veteran Brice McCain was so-so, playing the nickel and some on the outside. Tennessee also believes reclamation project D'Joun Smith, a former third rounder of the Colts, can provide depth. Johnathan Cyprien comes over from Jacksonville and will start at strong safety. Kevin Byard, who did lots of blitzing as a rookie, probably moves to his more natural free safety/center field type position in Year 2. Depth here is a questionable.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Ryan Succop had an outstanding year, with his only two field goal misses coming from beyond 50 yards. Brett Kern placed 32 of his 77 punts inside the 20 and averaged 44.2 yards per punt. The coverage and return units got needed upgrades. The Titans added former Raiders special teams standouts Brynden Trawick and Daren Bates, plus ex-Falcons returner Eric Weems and Jackson, their second first-round draft pick, to provide more explosiveness on returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS Nothing short of the postseason will be acceptable for the Titans in 2017. Last year's major leap forward was an indication that the rebuild is on track, and the Titans believe it is time to realize the fruits of those labors by reaching the playoffs for the first time in nine years.

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN TITANS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
16 Cassel, Matt	QB	6-4	228	12	USC	FA-Dal-16	D7-NE-05
8 Mariota, Marcus	QB	6-4	222	2	Oregon	D1-15	D1-Ten-15
11 Tanney, Alex	QB	6-4	220	2	Monmouth (IL)	FA-15	FA-KC-12
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
32 Fluellen, David	RB	5-11	224	1	Toledo	FA-15	FA-Phi-14
45 Fowler, Jalston	FB	5-11	254	2	Alabama	D4b-15	D4b-Ten-15
22 Henry, Derrick	RB	6-3	247	1	Alabama	D2c-16	D2c-Ten-16
29 Murray, DeMarco	RB	6-1	220	6	Oklahoma	T-Phi-16	D3-Dal-11
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
88 Amaro, Jace	TE	6-5	265	3	Texas Tech	W-NYJ-16	D2-NYJ-14
84 Cunningham, Jerome	TE	6-3	250	2	S. Connecticut St.	W-NYJ-16	FA-NYG-14
83 Douglas, Harry	WR	6-0	183	9	Louisville	FA-15	D3-Atl-08
17 Krause, Jonathan	WR	5-11	190	1	Vanderbilt	FA-16	FA-Cle-14
18 Matthews, Rishard	WR	6-0	217	5	Nevada	FA-Mia-16	D7b-Mia-12
15 Maye, K.J.	WR	5-8	191	1	Minnesota	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
10 McBride, Tre	WR	6-0	210	2	William & Mary	D7-15	D7-Ten-15
85 Semisch, Tim	TE	6-8	275	1	Northern Illinois	FA-17	FA-Mia-15
19 Sharpe, Tajae	WR	6-2	194	1	Massachusetts	D5a-16	D5a-Ten-16
89 Supernaw, Phillip	TE	6-5	248	3	Ouachita Baptist	FA-15	FA-Hou-12
82 Walker, Delanie	TE	6-2	248	11	Central Missouri	FA-SF-13	D6-SF-06
14 Weems, Eric	WR	5-9	195	10	Bethune-Cookman	FA-Atl-17	FA-Atl-07
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
61 Barton, Karim	G	6-3	313	1	Morgan State	FA-16	FA-Phi-14
78 Conklin, Jack	T	6-6	308	1	Michigan State	D1-16	D1-Ten-16
60 Jones, Ben	C	6-3	308	5	Georgia	FA-Hou-16	D4a-Hou-12
71 Kelly, Dennis	G/T	6-8	321	5	Purdue	T-Phi-16	D5-Phi-12
64 Kline, Josh	G	6-3	300	4	Kent State	W-NE-16	FA-NE-13
68 Lelito, Tim	G/C	6-4	315	4	Grand Valley St.	FA-NO-17	FA-NO-13
77 Lewan, Taylor	T	6-7	309	3	Michigan	D1-14	D1-Ten-14
68 Marz, Tyler	T	6-7	316	1	Wisconsin	FA-16	FA-Ten-16
66 Matias, Josue	G/T	6-5	309	1	Florida State	FA-15	FA-Ten-15
67 Spain, Quinton	G	6-4	330	2	West Virginia	FA-15	FA-Ten-15
79 Tretola, Sebastian	G	6-4	314	1	Arkansas	D6-16	D6-Ten-16
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
92 Abdesmad, Mehdi	DE	6-6	284	1	Boston College	FA-16	FA-Ten-16
95 Blackson, Angelo	DE	6-4	318	2	Auburn	D4a-15	D4a-Ten-15
99 Casey, Jurrell	DE	6-1	305	6	USC	D3-11	D3-Ten-11
94 Johnson, Austin	DL	6-4	314	1	Penn State	D2b-16	D2b-Ten-16
90 Jones, DaQuan	DL	6-4	322	3	Penn State	D4a-14	D4a-Ten-14
97 Klug, Karl	DL	6-3	278	6	Iowa	D5-11	D5-Ten-11
72 Lyons, Caushaud	DE	6-5	284	1	Tusculum	FA-17	FA-TB-15
96 Williams, Sylvester	NT	6-2	313	4	North Carolina	FA-Den-17	D1-Den-13
75 Woods, Antwaun	NT	6-1	318	1	USC	FA-16	FA-Ten-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
53 Bates, Daren	LB	5-11	225	4	Auburn	FA-Oak-17	FA-LAR-13
56 Brown, Kourtnei	OLB	6-4	253	1	Clemson	FA-16	FA-SF-12
58 Cliett, Reshard	LB	6-2	222	1	South Florida	FA-17	D6-Hou-15
93 Dodd, Kevin	OLB	6-5	277	1	Clemson	D2a-16	D2a-Ten-16
91 Morgan, Derrick	OLB	6-4	261	7	Georgia Tech	D1-10	D1-Ten-10
98 Orakpo, Brian	OLB	6-4	257	8	Texas	FA-Was-15	D1-Was-09
50 Palmer, Nate	LB	6-2	248	4	Illinois State	W-GB-16	D6-GB-13
57 Staples, Justin	LB	6-4	245	3	Illinois	FA-14	FA-Cle-13
41 Tavai, J.R.	OLB	6-2	249	1	USC	FA-15	FA-Ten-15
52 Wallace, Aaron	OLB	6-2	242	1	UCLA	D7a-16	D7a-Ten-16
54 Williamson, Avery	LB	6-1	246	3	Kentucky	D5-14	D5-Ten-14
59 Woodyard, Wesley	LB	6-0	233	9	Kentucky	FA-Den-14	FA-Den-08
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
31 Byard, Kevin	S	5-11	212	1	Middle Tennessee	D3-16	D3-Ten-16
37 Cyprien, Johnathan	S	6-0	217	4	FIU	FA-Jac-17	D2-Jac-13
30 Hurst, Demontre	DB	5-10	191	3	Oklahoma	FA-Chi-17	FA-Chi-13
23 McCain, Brice	CB	5-9	190	8	Utah	FA-Mia-16	D6-Hou-09
37 Reed, Kalan	CB	5-11	192	1	Southern Miss	D7b-16	D7b-Ten-16
35 Riley, Curtis	DB	6-0	190	2	Fresno State	FA-15	FA-Ten-15
26 Ryan, Logan	CB	5-11	195	4	Rutgers	FA-NE-17	D3a-NE-13
21 Searcy, Da'Norris	S	5-11	207	6	North Carolina	FA-Buf-15	D4-Buf-11
36 Sims, LeShaun	CB	6-0	203	1	Southern Utah	D5b-16	D5b-Ten-16
20 Smith, D'Joun	CB	5-11	193	2	Florida Atlantic	FA-16	D3-Ind-15
33 Smith, Tye	CB	6-0	195	1	Towson	FA-17	D5-Sea-15
41 Trawick, Brynden	S	6-2	225	4	Troy	FA-Oak-17	FA-Bal-13
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
48 Brinkley, Beau	LS	6-4	260	5	Missouri	FA-12	FA-Ten-12
6 Kern, Brett	P	6-2	214	9	Toledo	W-Den-09	FA-Den-08
4 Succop, Ryan	K	6-2	218	8	South Carolina	FA-14	D7-KC-09

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	18	Rishard Matthews	19	Tajae Sharpe
WR	84	Corey Davis (R)	13	Taywan Taylor (R)
LT	77	Taylor Lewan	71	Dennis Kelly
LG	67	Quinton Spain	62	Corey Levin (R)
C	60	Ben Jones	68	Tim Lelito
RG	64	Josh Kline	79	Sebastian Tretola
RT	78	Jack Conklin	73	Brad Seaton (R)
TE	82	Delanie Walker	87	Jonnu Smith (R)
TE	89	Phillip Supernaw	88	Jace Amaro
QB	8	Marcus Mariota	16	Matt Cassel
RB	29	DeMarco Murray	22	Derrick Henry

DEFENSE

DE	99	Jurrell Casey	97	Karl Klug
DT	96	Sylvester Williams	94	Austin Johnson
DE	90	DaQuan Jones	95	Angelo Blackson
OLB	91	Derrick Morgan	52	Aaron Wallace
ILB	59	Wesley Woodyard	55	Jayon Brown (R)
ILB	54	Avery Williamson	50	Nate Palmer
OLB	98	Brian Orakpo	93	Kevin Dodd
CB	26	Logan Ryan	23	Brice McCain
CB	25	Adoree' Jackson (R)	36	LeShaun Sims
FS	31	Kevin Byard	21	Da'Norris Searcy
SS	37	Johnathan Cyprien	41	Brynden Trawick

SPECIALISTS

K	4	Ryan Succop	KR	14	Eric Weems
P	6	Brett Kern	PR	14	Eric Weems

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
LB	Daren Bates	Oakland
S	Johnathan Cyprien	Jacksonville
G/C	Tim Lelito	New Orleans
CB	Logan Ryan	New England
S	Brynden Trawick	Oakland
KR	Eric Weems	Atlanta
DT	Sylvester Williams	Denver

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
CB	Valentino Blake	N.Y. Giants
TE	Anthony Fasano	Dolphins
S	Rashad Johnson	Free Agent
CB	Jason McCourty	Free Agent
C/G	Brian Schwenke	Indianapolis
LB	Sean Spence	Indianapolis
S	Daimion Stafford	Free Agent
G	Chance Warmack	Philadelphia
DT	Al Woods	Indianapolis
WR	Kendall Wright	Chicago

SCOUTING THE TITANS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP TENNESSEE "Everything went according to plan under first-year general manager Jon Robinson until the Game 15 fibula fracture suffered by franchise quarterback Marcus Mariota. The idea going into 2016 was to build the offensive line and develop a ground game to take some pressure off their second-year signal caller. It worked to the tune of Tennessee finishing third in the league in rushing, third in third-down percentage and first in red-zone scoring via touchdowns. Mariota has remarkably thrown 33 touchdowns in the red zone against zero interceptions — so he truly values the football. ... DeMarco Murray enjoyed a bounce-back season, and look for Derrick Henry to get more touches this year, too. ... In the draft, Robinson chose Western Michigan's Corey Davis at No. 5 overall to become Mariota's first option. ... The line is set with Ben Jones at center and Taylor Lewan and Jack Conklin at the tackles. ... On defense, the Titans added Sylvester Williams (Broncos) in free agency. ... Brian Orakpo and Derrick Morgan combined for 19.5 sacks from their outside linebacker posts, while Avery Williamson turned in another solid season from the inside. ... After being 30th in the NFL in passing yards allowed, they signed cornerback Logan Ryan from the Patriots and strong safety Johnathan Cyprien from the Jaguars, plus drafted Adoree' Jackson. ... The Titans improved their turnover margin from minus-14 to even in 2016. If they can get that number to the plus side, this team is better than a legitimate playoff contender."

Davis: Western Michigan Athletics; Casey: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

TITANS IN THE *DRAFT*

B+

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	**Corey Davis**	**WR**	**6-3**	**209**	**Western Michigan**
1.	Adoree' Jackson	CB	5-10	186	USC
3.	Taywan Taylor	WR	5-11	203	Western Kentucky
3.	Jonnu Smith	TE	6-3	248	FIU
5.	Jayon Brown	ILB	6-0	226	UCLA
6.	Corey Levin	G/C	6-4	307	Chattanooga
7.	Josh Carraway	OLB	6-3	242	TCU
7.	Brad Seaton	T	6-7	310	Villanova
7.	Khalfani Muhammad	RB	5-9	175	California

The Titans showed last year that they were not afraid to insert rookies into the lineup. Tennessee started two rookies on offense (Jack Conklin, Tajae Sharpe) and three more on defense (Kevin Byard, Austin Johnson, LeShaun Sims) at the end of the year, with a few others being used as role players. This year, several more fresh faces will be counted upon from the start. Corey Davis and Adoree' Jackson should both plug and play and could be impact players at positions of need, thanks to their speed and athleticism. Jackson will also be used on special teams in the return game. Taywan Taylor could find himself as the team's primary slot receiver with his ability to make plays down the field. Jonnu Smith can have some impact if his in-line blocking is adequate. Jayon Brown will battle for the inside linebacker position in the team's nickel package. Corey Levin has the ability to play multiple positions on the interior of the line. Josh Carraway was a productive player at TCU.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

WIDE NET Tennessee Titans general manager Jon Robinson doesn't mind looking in different areas to find the right fits for his football team. Of the nine players chosen by the Titans on draft weekend, five came from non-Power 5 conferences. The Titans took players from Western Michigan (Corey Davis), Western Kentucky (Taywan Taylor), Florida International (Jonnu Smith), Chattanooga (Corey Levin) and Villanova (Brad Seaton). "I tell all these guys when I talk to them, whether they played at some big school or some small school, we don't care where you came from," Robinson says. "If you can play football and if you'll buy into our philosophy and our style of football, you can play for the Tennessee Titans."

LOOKING ELSEWHERE As for players from the power conferences, three of the four players the Titans selected from the major schools came from the Pac-12 (USC's Adoree' Jackson, UCLA's Jayon Brown and Cal's Khalfani Muhammad) while the other was from the Big 12 (Josh Carraway of TCU). The Titans did not draft a single player from the SEC or the Big Ten, two conferences generally regarded as the most talent-laden in recent years. It marked the first time since 1979 that the franchise had failed to take at least one player from the SEC or the Big Ten in a draft.

CHECK THE TAPE Two players in the Titans' nine-member draft class from 2017 actually knew each other before they became teammates in Tennessee. Jackson, a cornerback from USC, and Muhammad, a running back from Cal, have competed against each other since high school in both football and track. Muhammad, who ran a 4.34 in the 40-yard dash on his pro day, says he routinely beat Jackson when the two ran track against each other in high school and college. "I grew up with him, running track and playing football," Muhammad says. "Last time we raced he did get me, but the majority of the time I won. He'll tell you, you can look it up. There is video."

SPECIAL OPENER The season opener against the Oakland Raiders will be a homecoming of sorts for a pair of Titans newcomers. Linebacker Daron Bates and safety Brynden Trawick both signed with the Titans in the offseason after being with the Raiders last year. The Titans signed both players for their special teams prowess.

WALKING WOUNDED Quarterback Marcus Mariota wasn't the only Titan who spent time on crutches due to an offseason surgery. Tennessee coach Mike Mularkey had surgery on his foot and was seen at some of the pro days evaluating college talent either on crutches or with his foot in a walking boot.

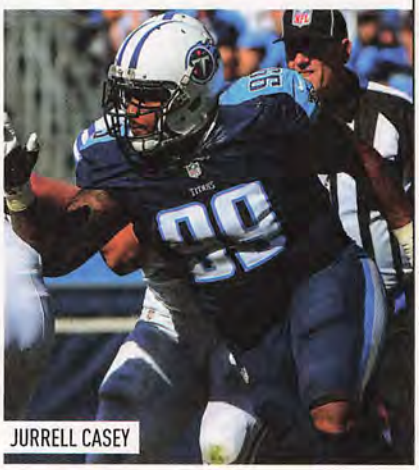
SOPHOMORE SURGE Mariota threw 26 touchdown passes in his second season, the most for the franchise by a quarterback since Hall of Famer Warren Moon had 33 for the Oilers in 1990.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

86.9 The Titans allowed a league-worst 9.9 receptions per game and 86.9 yards per game to No. 1 receivers.

66.3 The Titans also allowed a league-worst 66.3 yards per game to No. 2 receivers, though 7.3 receptions per game was only second worst.

5.7 The Tennessee offense scored an average of 5.7 points per red-zone opportunity, the best in the league.



JURRELL CASEY

DENVER BRONCOS

AFC WEST FORECAST

3

Von Miller remains the face of the Denver Broncos. Like most of the team's best players, he is a wrecking ball on defense. The Broncos make quarterbacks' lives miserable, either through Miller's pass rush or the clingy coverage of the "No Fly Zone" secondary.

The concern centers on the offense and whether the Broncos have a quarterback capable of winning a championship. New head coach Vance Joseph inherited a team that won a Super Bowl just two years ago, calling his challenge a "reboot, not a rebuild." General manager John Elway and the Broncos assembled a star-studded offensive staff — former offensive coordinators Mike McCoy, Bill Musgrave, Jeff Davidson and Geep Chryst — with hopes of caffeinating an attack that was difficult to watch for long stretches last season. Not only did the defending champion Broncos miss the playoffs, but they also were pushed around. In order to avoid a repeat, Elway added beef along the offensive and defensive lines and drafted players with "attitude, who hate to lose." The road back to the playoffs for the sixth time in seven seasons begins in the trenches.

OFFENSE The Broncos' offense was forever developing last year but never emerged. Denver had the fourth-most three-and-out drives and ranked 27th in rushing yards and 26th in red-zone touchdowns.

This season figures to be less futile. The optimism begins at quarterback. Trevor Siemian, 8–6 as a first-year starter with 18 touchdowns and 10 interceptions, underwent surgery on his non-throwing left shoulder but missed no offseason workouts. He earned teammates' respect with toughness — he was named a midseason captain — and for his ability to digest the playbook and apply information quickly. The belief is that the new offense will benefit Paxton Lynch more than Siemian. However, Siemian remains excited about the attack. "There are a lot completions in this offense," he says. There will also be more freedom to audible — a Siemian strength — at the line of scrimmage. Lynch impressed teammates with his maturity in the offseason. After what amounted to a near-redshirt season, Lynch believes he can win the starting job in an offense that has deep ball routes and spread formation concepts more similar to what he used in college.

With less zone blocking and more power schemes, the Broncos will look to "impose their will" up front, according to Joseph. C.J. Anderson, a bowling ball with legs who excels in yards after contact, enters a crossroads season. Can he be a bell cow or just a complementary back along with former Utah star Devontae Booker and newly acquired Jamaal Charles? The addition of Charles, a five-time 1,000-yard rusher in Kansas City, gives the Broncos a veteran who can diversify the offense with his ability to catch the ball out of the backfield.

The entire offseason makeover focused on fortifying the line with first-round left tackle draft pick Garett Bolles and free-agent signings Ron Leary (right guard) and Menelik Watson (right tackle). The new offensive scheme calls for quarterbacks to release the ball quickly, which will help the line and reduce the number of sacks.

Look for a steady diet of bubble screens to receiver Demaryius Thomas and more motion and varied routes from Emmanuel Sanders. Joseph has challenged Thomas to be a star, and that starts with shrinking his alarming number of drops the past two seasons. Sanders has been the Broncos' most reliable weapon and says the new offense reminds him of "the wide receiver heaven" approach used in 2014. For Sanders and Thomas to realize their potential — say, 1,200-plus yards receiving — they need help in the red zone. That's where the selection of Michigan tight end Jake Butt comes into play. If he recovers from his second ACL surgery and returns in October, Butt provides size and mismatches inside the 20 that have been lacking since the departures of Julius Thomas and Wes Welker.

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER: Pat Bowlen
PRESIDENT/CEO: Joe Ellis
EXECUTIVE VP OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS/GM: John Elway
DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL ADMIN.: Mike Sullivan
STADIUM: Sports Authority Field at Mile High (76,125)
SURFACE: Kentucky Bluegrass
WEBSITE: www.denverbroncos.com
TICKETS: 720-258-3333
TRAINING CAMP: Paul D. Bowlen Memorial Broncos Centre (Englewood, Colo.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Vance Joseph
RECORD WITH TEAM: 0–0
CAREER RECORD: 0–0
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Mike McCoy
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Joe Woods
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Brock Olivo
QUARTERBACKS: Bill Musgrave
RUNNING BACKS: Eric Studesville
WIDE RECEIVERS: Tyke Tolbert
TIGHT ENDS: Geep Chryst
OFFENSIVE LINE: Jeff Davidson
DEFENSIVE LINE: Bill Kollar
LINEBACKERS: Reggie Herring
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS: Fred Pagac
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Marcus Robertson

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2012	13
2013	13
2014	12
2015	12
2016	9

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 11	L.A. Chargers (Mon.)	10:20	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Sept. 17	Dallas	4:25	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Sept. 24	at Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Oct. 1	Oakland	4:25	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
BYE							
Oct. 15	N.Y. Giants	8:30	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Oct. 22	at L.A. Chargers	4:25	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Oct. 30	at Kansas City (Mon.)	8:30	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Nov. 5	at Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Nov. 12	New England	8:30	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Nov. 19	Cincinnati	4:25	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Nov. 26	at Oakland	4:25	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Dec. 3	at Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Dec. 10	N.Y. Jets	4:05	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Dec. 14	at Indianapolis (Thu.)	8:25	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Dec. 24	at Washington	1:00	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Dec. 31	Kansas City	4:25	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

LB VON MILLER

2016 RESULTS (9-7)

Sept. 8	Carolina	W	21-20
Sept. 18	Indianapolis	W	34-20
Sept. 25	at Cincinnati	W	29-17
Oct. 2	at Tampa Bay	W	27-7
Oct. 9	Atlanta	L	16-23
Oct. 13	at L.A. Chargers	L	13-21
Oct. 24	Houston	W	27-9
Oct. 30	L.A. Chargers	W	27-19
Nov. 6	at Oakland	L	20-30
Nov. 13	at New Orleans	W	25-23
Nov. 27	Kansas City (ot)	L	27-30
Dec. 4	at Jacksonville	W	20-10
Dec. 11	at Tennessee	L	10-13
Dec. 18	New England	L	3-16
Dec. 25	at Kansas City	L	10-33
Jan. 1	Oakland	W	24-6

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Trevor Siemian	486	289	3,401	18	10
Paxton Lynch	83	49	497	2	1
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Devontae Booker	174	612	3.5	4	
C.J. Anderson	110	437	4.0	4	
Justin Forsett	43	155	3.6	1	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Demaryius Thomas	90	1,083	12.0	5	
Emmanuel Sanders	79	1,032	13.1	5	
Devontae Booker	31	265	8.5	1	
Virgil Green	22	237	10.8	1	
Jordan Norwood	21	232	11.0	1	

KICKING: Brandon McManus, 29-34 FGs, 32-33 PAT, 119 points
TACKLES: Todd Davis, 97; T.J. Ward, 87
SACKS: J Von Miller, 13.5;Shane Ray, 8.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Aqib Talib, 3; Darian Stewart, 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	323.1	27	14
Rushing	92.8	27	15
Passing	230.3	T21	10
Scoring	20.8	22	11
Third Down %	34.2	31	16
Punt Returns	8.5	15	6
Kick Returns	22.9	11	6

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	316.1	4	2
Rushing	130.3	28	13
Passing	185.8	1	1
Scoring	18.6	4	2
Interceptions	14	T12	7
Sacks	42	T3	1
Turnover Differential	+2	T13	T8

C.J. ANDERSON

DEFENSE The narrative that the Broncos defense failed to live up to expectations makes for great talk radio, but it doesn't follow the numbers. The Broncos' defenders rank as the primary reason Denver finished with a winning record and even sniffed the playoffs. The Broncos produced 50 three-and-out drives and held opponents to the fourth-fewest points. However, room for improvement exists under new coordinator Joe Woods.

The Broncos addressed their primary weakness — porous rush defense. They signed free agents Domata Peko, a nose guard who is attempting to reverse the decline he showed last season in Cincinnati, and Zach Kerr, a meaty lineman who can play inside or outside in the Broncos' scheme. Last season, only defensive end Derek Wolfe stopped the run with any consistency. End DeMarcus Walker, the team's second-round selection from Florida State, will be counted on as a rotational player who can provide an inside pass rush on third down and more production than Adam Gotsis delivered last year as a rookie.

Woods and Joseph plan to be less predictable on first drives, where the Broncos allowed a stunning 55 points, tied for second worst in the NFL.

Stopping the run remains paramount. The Broncos need a bounce-back season from linebacker Brandon Marshall, a sound tackler in space who was sabotaged by a hamstring injury. If the Broncos force teams into third-and-longs, it plays into their strengths: pass rush and coverage.

Miller is eyeing NFL Defensive Player of the Year honors after losing by one vote to Oakland's Khalil Mack. Outside linebacker Shane Ray, who brings elite first-step burst, will be counted on as the retired DeMarcus Ware's primary replacement.

The Broncos will attempt to become only the second NFL team to lead the league in pass defense in three consecutive seasons. As safety Darian Stewart put it, "We are ready to be legendary." Cornerback Chris Harris provides versatility, excelling at slot coverage, and Aqib Talib is aging like Benjamin Button, producing his best season a year ago as he turned film study and tendencies into turnovers. Safety T.J. Ward, a team leader, provides thump in coverage and can play in the box as a linebacker if needed.

SPECIALISTS Brandon McManus has been a steady contributor, maybe even a life raft for the struggling offense. He has not missed a kick under 40 yards, converted eight from 50 yards or longer and served as a weapon with booming kickoffs the past two seasons. Punter Riley Dixon overcame a slow start to finish with a 45.7-yard average and the best net average (41.3) by a rookie in NFL history. The Broncos desperately need a boost on punt returns. It was so bad at one point that Talib pushed returner Jordan Norwood off the field. The Broncos loaded up on candidates in the draft, led by shifty Isaiah McKenzie and playmakers Carlos Henderson and Brendan Langley.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Broncos measure themselves in division titles and Super Bowl crowns. Last season's disappointment cannot be overstated. To rank among the AFC elite again, they must stop the run and establish a ground attack. The former allows their gnarly defense to take more chances. The Broncos are 9–0 over the past two seasons when they score a defensive touchdown. Offensively, the focus will center on the quarterback. Can either Siemian, the slight favorite, or Lynch take more chances while still taking care of the ball? Joseph wants a physical running game to ease the pressure on the quarterbacks.

Joseph will be counted on to help unify a locker room that showed fissures last year because of the offense's shortcomings, while also stressing a tougher mentality. He's not afraid to hold players accountable. He inherits several motivated veterans who are still seething over missing the postseason. The Broncos look like a nine-win team, but the players dismiss such pessimism. "I feel like our urgency is there," Talib says. "In all honesty, I don't think our urgency was there last year. We were kind of in recovery mode. Our urgency is back."

Tim Umphrey

2017 VETERAN BRONCOS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
12 Lynch, Paxton	QB	6-7	244	1	Memphis	D1-16	D1-Den-16
13 Siemian, Trevor	QB	6-3	220	2	Northwestern	D7a-15	D7a-Den-15
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
22 Anderson, C.J.	RB	5-8	224	4	California	FA-13	FA-Den-13
23 Booker, Devontae	RB	5-11	219	1	Utah	D4-16	D4-Den-16
25 Charles, Jamaal	RB	5-11	199	9	Texas	FA-KC-17	D3a-KC-08
32 Janovich, Andy	FB	6-1	238	1	Nebraska	D6a-16	D6a-Den-16
40 Thompson, Juwan	RB	5-11	225	3	Duke	FA-14	FA-Den-14
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
15 Brown, Marlon	WR	6-5	214	4	Georgia	FA-16	FA-Bal-13
83 Derby, A.J.	TE	6-5	255	2	Arkansas	T-NE-16	D6-NE-15
16 Fowler, Bennie	WR	6-1	212	2	Michigan State	FA-14	FA-Den-14
85 Green, Virgil	TE	6-5	255	6	Nevada	D7a-11	D7a-Den-11
82 Heuerman, Jeff	TE	6-5	255	2	Ohio State	D3-15	D3-Den-15
84 Krieger-Coble, Henry	TE	6-4	248	1	Iowa	FA-16	FA-Den-16
14 Latimer, Cody	WR	6-2	215	3	Indiana	D2-14	D2-Den-14
19 Raymond, Kalif	WR	5-9	160	1	Holy Cross	FA-16	FA-Den-16
10 Sanders, Emmanuel	WR	5-11	180	7	SMU	FA-Pit-14	D3-Pit-10
81 Scheu, Steven	TE	6-5	255	1	Vanderbilt	FA-16	FA-NE-16
17 Sharp, Hunter	WR	5-11	198	1	Utah State	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
87 Taylor, Jordan	WR	6-5	210	1	Rice	FA-15	FA-Den-15
88 Thomas, Demaryius	WR	6-3	229	7	Georgia Tech	D1a-10	D1a-Den-10
86 Traylor, Austin	TE	6-3	255	1	Wisconsin	FA-16	FA-Dal-16
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
55 Day, Dillon	C	6-4	299	1	Mississippi State	FA-15	FA-Den-15
53 Ferentz, James	C	6-2	285	2	Iowa	W-Hou-15	FA-Hou-14
76 Garcia, Max	G	6-4	309	2	Florida	D4-15	D4-Den-15
65 Leary, Ronald	G	6-3	320	4	Memphis	FA-Dal-17	FA-Dal-12
60 McGovern, Connor	G	6-4	306	1	Missouri	D5-16	D5-Den-16
64 Murray, Justin	T	6-5	304	1	Cincinnati	FA-16	FA-Den-16
61 Paradis, Matt	C	6-3	300	2	Boise State	D6-14	D6-Den-14
74 Sambrailo, Ty	OL	6-5	315	2	Colorado State	D2-15	D2-Den-15
79 Schofield, Michael	OL	6-6	301	3	Michigan	D3-14	D3-Den-14
71 Stephenson, Donald	T	6-6	312	5	Oklahoma	FA-KC-16	D3-KC-12
70 Turner, Billy	G	6-5	310	3	North Dakota St.	W-Bal-16	D3-Mia-14
75 Watson, Menelik	T	6-5	315	4	Florida State	D2-13	D2-Oak-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
93 Crick, Jared	DE	6-4	285	5	Nebraska	FA-Hou-16	D4c-Hou-12
99 Gotsis, Adam	DE	6-4	287	1	Georgia Tech	D2-16	D2-Den-16
92 Kerr, Zach	DL	6-2	334	3	Delaware	FA-Ind-17	FA-Ind-14
94 Peko, Domata	DT	6-3	325	11	Michigan State	FA-Cin-17	D4-Cin-06
90 Peko, Kyle	NT	6-1	305	1	Oregon State	FA-16	FA-Den-16
91 Raciti, Travis	DL	6-4	305	1	San Jose State	FA-16	FA-Phi-15
96 Richardson, Bobby	DE	6-3	286	1	Indiana	FA-17	FA-NO-15
95 Wolfe, Derek	DE	6-5	285	5	Cincinnati	D2a-12	D2a-Den-12
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
50 Anderson, Zaire	ILB	5-11	220	1	Nebraska	FA-15	FA-Den-15
48 Barrett, Shaquil	OLB	6-2	250	3	Colorado State	FA-14	FA-Den-14
51 Davis, Todd	ILB	6-1	230	3	Sacramento State	W-NO-14	FA-NO-14
59 Dora, Vontarrius	OLB	6-4	256	1	Louisiana Tech	FA-16	FA-Den-16
91 Edebali, Kasim	DE	6-2	253	3	Boston College	FA-NO-17	FA-NO-14
49 Gause, Quentin	LB	6-0	243	1	Rutgers	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
54 Marshall, Brandon	ILB	6-1	250	5	Nevada	FA-13	D5-Jac-12
58 Miller, Von	OLB	6-3	250	6	Texas A&M	D1-11	D1-Den-11
52 Nelson, Corey	ILB	6-1	226	3	Oklahoma	D7-14	D7-Den-14
56 Ray, Shane	OLB	6-3	245	2	Missouri	D1-15	D1-Den-15
46 Synder, Kevin	LB	6-2	245	1	Rutgers	FA-16	FA-Det-15
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
37 Doss, Lorenzo	CB	5-11	187	2	Tulane	D5-15	D5-Den-15
25 Harris Jr., Chris	CB	5-10	199	5	Kansas	FA-11	FA-Den-11
39 Nixon, Taurean	CB	5-10	187	2	Tulane	D7b-15	D7b-Den-15
34 Parks, Will	S	6-1	194	1	Arizona	D6b-16	D6b-Den-16
29 Roby, Bradley	CB	5-11	194	3	Ohio State	D1-14	D1-Den-14
31 Simmons, Justin	S	6-2	202	1	Boston College	D3-16	D3-Den-16
26 Stewart, Darian	S	5-11	214	7	South Carolina	FA-Bal-15	FA-LAR-10
21 Talib, Aqib	CB	6-1	205	9	Kansas	FA-NE-14	D1-TB-08
43 Ward, T.J.	S	5-10	200	7	Oregon	FA-Cle-14	D2-Cle-10
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
9 Dixon, Riley	P	6-4	221	1	Syracuse	D7-16	D7-Den-16
42 Kreiter, Casey	LS	6-1	250	1	Iowa	FA-16	FA-Dal-14
8 McManus, Brandon	K	6-3	201	3	Temple	T-NYG-14	FA-Ind-13

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	88	Demaryius Thomas	87	Jordan Taylor
WR	10	Emmanuel Sanders		Carlos Henderson (R)
LT		Garett Bolles (R)	71	Donald Stephenson
LG	76	Max Garcia	60	Connor McGovern
C	61	Matt Paradis	53	James Ferentz
RG	65	Ron Leary	79	Michael Schofield
RT	75	Menelik Watson	74	Ty Sambrailo
TE	85	Virgil Green	83	A.J. Derby
QB	13	Trevor Siemian	12	Paxton Lynch
RB	22	C.J. Anderson	23	Devontae Booker
FB	32	Andy Janovich	40	Juwan Thompson

DEFENSE

DE	95	Derek Wolfe	92	Zach Kerr
DT	94	Domata Peko	90	Kyle Peko
DE	93	Jared Crick		DeMarcus Walker (R)
OLB	58	Von Miller	48	Shaquil Barrett
ILB	54	Brandon Marshall	52	Corey Nelson
ILB	51	Todd Davis	50	Zaire Anderson
OLB	56	Shane Ray	59	Vontarrius Dora
CB	21	Aqib Talib	39	Taurean Nixon
CB	25	Chris Harris	29	Bradley Roby
SS	43	T.J. Ward	34	Will Parks
FS	26	Darian Stewart	31	Justin Simmons

SPECIALISTS

K	8	Brandon McManus	KR	Brendan Langley (R)
P	9	Riley Dixon	PR	Isaiah McKenzie (R)

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

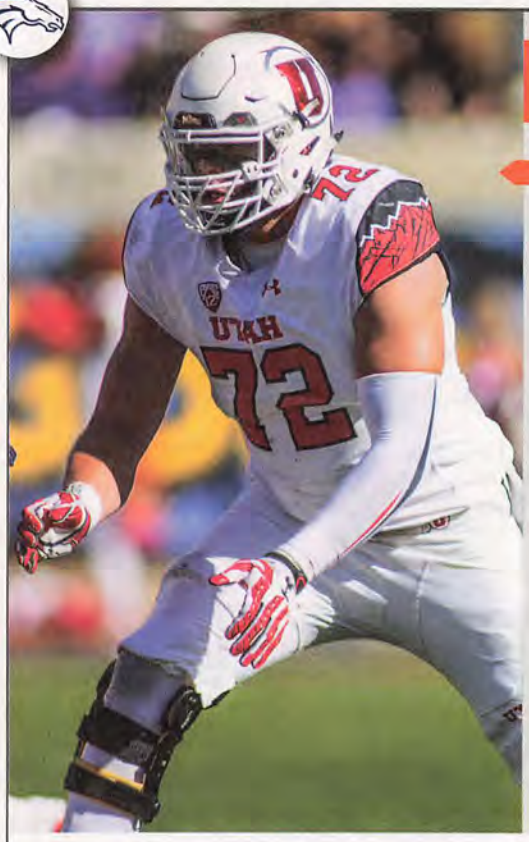
POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
RB	Jamaal Charles	Kansas City
OLB	Kasim Edebali	New Orleans
DL	Zach Kerr	Indianapolis
OG	Ron Leary	Dallas
NT	Domata Peko	Cincinnati
OT	Menelik Watson	Oakland

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
OT	Russell Okung	L.A. Chargers
OLB	DeMarcus Ware	Retired
OLB	Dekoda Watson	San Francisco
CB	Kayvon Webster	L.A. Chargers
NT	Sylvester Williams	Tennessee

SCOUTING THE BRONCOS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP DENVER "John Elway has already announced that there will be an open competition at the quarterback position between unheralded Trevor Siemian and last year's first-round choice, Paxton Lynch. Internally, they were pleased with Siemian's progress and the way he handled the job and his teammates. However, Lynch brings more raw potential to the table but must do better in the communication and execution phases of his game. ... Denver will have a backfield-by-committee approach in 2017 with C.J. Anderson, Devontae Booker, rookie De'Angelo Henderson and former Chief Jamaal Charles, signed right after the draft. ... Wideouts Demaryius Thomas and Emmanuel Sanders both suffered through injury-plagued 2016 seasons. ... The offensive line is where their major issues are, and they tried to address the left tackle spot by drafting Utah's Garett Bolles in the first round. They hope he can start right away. ... The defense will go through a major transition from coordinator Wade Phillips to Joe Woods and a subtle change in scheme. ... Still, Von Miller is at the top of his game as a pass rusher, and Shane Ray continues to get better since being drafted in 2015. ... Unheralded linebacker Todd Davis is an unknown to the fans, but he is a productive player. ... Regardless of who calls the defense, this team has rushers and cover people with tons of versatility in the secondary with Chris Harris, Aqib Talib and Bradley Roby. Like Houston, the Broncos are a legitimate contender if they can get any level of consistent quarterback play. The problem is that it's extremely difficult to manage a quarterback competition while having everyone else focus on winning."



BRONCOS IN THE *DRAFT* B+

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Garett Bolles	OT	6-5	297	Utah
2.	DeMarcus Walker	DE	6-4	280	Florida State
3.	Carlos Henderson	WR	5-11	199	Louisiana Tech
3.	Brendan Langley	CB	6-0	201	Lamar
4.	Jake Butt	TE	6-6	250	Michigan
5.	Isaiah McKenzie	WR	5-7	173	Georgia
6.	De'Angelo Henderson	RB	5-7	203	Coastal Carolina
7.	Chad Kelly	QB	6-2	224	Ole Miss

In arguably his most important draft as GM, John Elway continued to fortify the offensive and defensive lines while adding speed on special teams. Garett Bolles, who dominated in his only season at Utah, will be counted on to start as a rookie, although DeMarcus Walker, as a rotational player, could have the most impact this season. Isaiah McKenzie can and should spark the special teams. The X-factor of the class remains Jake Butt, who tore his ACL in Michigan's Orange Bowl loss to Walker's Florida State team. If his knee proves healthy, he could help solve the team's problems in the red zone, providing a mismatch and a reliable weapon for a young quarterback. Speaking of young quarterbacks, Chad Kelly put up big numbers at Ole Miss prior to going down with a torn ACL late in his senior season. The injury, plus some character concerns, caused him to drop all the way to the seventh round (and the final pick of the draft). As a whole, this draft landed foundational pieces, but it will ultimately be graded on a scale based on Bolles' career.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

CUSTOM INK Von Miller spent the 2016 offseason traveling, filming commercials and performing on "Dancing With the Stars." With his schedule returning to normalcy, Miller paid homage to two things of great meaning to him: the state of Texas and Super Bowl 50. In April, Miller got two huge tattoos on his legs. His right quadriceps shows the state of Texas, where he grew up. His left thigh features the Super Bowl 50 trophy with "MVP" stenciled below with Miller's autograph. "I finally had time to do it," Miller says.

BOWL THEM OVER C.J. Anderson plays running back like a bowling ball with legs. He excels in yards after contact. His style mirrors one of his favorite hobbies: bowling. He has developed into a legitimate bowler and competes in the offseason. He finished second in a doubles competition in Arkansas in the spring and recorded a high game of 270. "I've made some tournaments," he says. "I have missed some cuts, coming close. Those PBA guys are really, really good. I'll find my way there. My goal is to make my first PBA cut."

SPARE HAT Fullback Andy Janovich plays violently. He punishes defenders. And equipment. Janovich busted four facemasks and cracked two helmets as a rookie last season after similar collisions in college. The Broncos quickly learned how to deal with it. "They keep an extra helmet on the sidelines ready for me," Janovich says.

LET IT SNOW When the Broncos drafted rookie DeMarcus Walker, he was angry. He seethed over having eight pass rushers selected before him. Then when arrived at Dove Valley, he melted. Sort of. Having grown up in Jacksonville, Fla., and attended Florida State, he had never seen snow. "As the plane was landing in Denver, I had no idea what I was seeing. It was just white everywhere on the ground," Walker says. As Walker walked into the team parking lot, he stopped to make his first snowball. He needs practice. It was roughly the size of a beach ball. He roared in approval as he tossed into to the ground.

TRUE FAN Don't call Broncos safety T.J. Ward a bandwagon fan. He has long been a follower of the Golden State Warriors. Before Steph Curry. Before Klay Thompson. Ward, who grew up in the Bay Area, attends several Warriors games per season. He loves the team so much he has a huge Warriors tattoo on his ribcage.

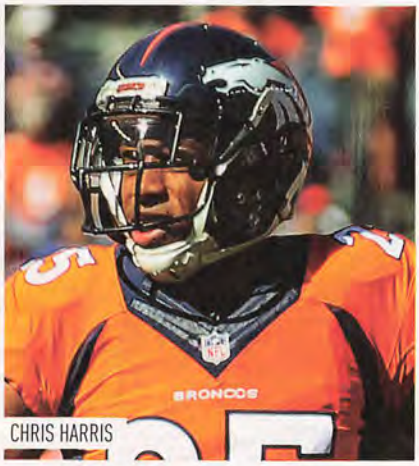
JOB DUTIES Vance Joseph made his way from defensive backs coach to a coordinator to the Broncos' top job, but his current position brings unique challenges. He had no idea of the stuff that comes across the coach's desk. He's been asked for decisions on travel, hotels, locker room decorations — well, everything. "The color of the walls, the carpet, those things I had no idea that they fell on my plate. I don't care. I just want to coach football, but it does fall on your plate."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

7.6 The Denver defense finished second in defensive Adjusted Sack Rate, sacking opposing quarterbacks on 7.6 percent of their pass attempts.

11 The Broncos stopped a league-low 11 percent of runs against them at or behind the line of scrimmage

51 Just 51 percent of runs by the Broncos on third-and-short, fourth-and-short and goal-to-go achieved a first down or touchdown, the fourth-lowest rate in the league.



CHRIS HARRIS

Bolles: Peter Brouillet; Harris: Tim Umphrey

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

AFC WEST FORECAST

2

In John Dorsey and Andy Reid the Chiefs trust. Kansas City has reached the playoffs in three of four seasons since hiring Dorsey as general manager and Reid as head coach — a remarkable turnaround after four postseason appearances in the 17 previous seasons.

The Chiefs broke Denver's five-year stranglehold on the AFC West and are coming off back-to-back playoff appearances for the first time 1995. Kansas City should sustain that momentum for at least one more season behind a ball-hawking defense and good-enough offense, but the question is whether that formula can succeed in the playoffs. So far, it hasn't.

It's been 48 years since the Chiefs reached the Super Bowl, and the clock is ticking on several key veterans — including quarterback Alex Smith (33) and linebackers Derrick Johnson (34) and Tamba Hali (33).

OFFENSE Smith is a polarizing figure in title-starved Kansas City despite a 41–20 record in four seasons. Only New England's Tom Brady (47) and Seattle's Russell Wilson (45) have more wins during that span. Still, fans openly wonder if Smith, who is regarded as a risk-averse game-manager, can win a Super Bowl. Smith threw for a career-high 3,502 yards last season, but his touchdown (3.1) and interception percentages (1.6) were his worst during his time in Reid's offense. Nonetheless, Smith's age and big cap number, not fan handwringing about his style, drove the Chiefs' decision to draft a quarterback — Texas Tech gunslinger Patrick Mahomes II — in the first round for the first time since 1983. Mahomes isn't ready to start, but the Chiefs are gambling that, after studying under Smith and learning from Reid for at least one season, he can become a franchise quarterback. Meanwhile, Smith remains the best hope for a Super Bowl run in the short term.

First-team All-Pro Travis Kelce, who brings most of the swagger to Kansas City's offense, headlines the pass-catching corps and shows no signs of slowing down. He led all NFL tight ends with 1,125 yards last season, but the Chiefs need more production from their wide receivers. That starts with a healthy Jeremy Maclin, who missed four games last season with a groin injury and posted career lows of 44 catches, 536 yards and two touchdowns. If Maclin rebounds, it should aid the continued development of other receivers — particularly Chris Conley (44 catches for 530 yards) and Albert Wilson (31 catches for 279 yards).

The wild card is Tyreek Hill, a speedster who racked up 61 catches for 593 yards with six scores and added 267 yards with three touchdowns rushing plus incredible special-teams value. It will be a treat to watch Reid deploy Hill now that the coach has a feel for all that he can do.

Hill will remain a factor in an otherwise pedestrian ground game. Running back Spencer Ware was fine with 214 carries for 921 yards and three touchdowns, but backup Charcandrick West averaged only 3.3 yards on 88 carries. That's a big reason why Kansas City invested a third-round pick in Toledo's Kareem Hunt. Don't be shocked if Hunt assumes a feature role now that the franchise's all-time leading rusher, Jamaal Charles, is gone.

Kansas City's line — Eric Fisher, Zach Fulton, Mitch Morse, Laurent Duvernay-Tardif and Mitchell Schwartz — returns intact. Parker Ehinger, who started four games at left guard last season before suffering a torn ACL, could supplant Fulton.

DEFENSE The Chiefs have been a top-10 scoring defense four consecutive seasons. Kansas City finished seventh last year (19.4 ppg) and led the NFL with 33 turnovers despite losing three key starters — linebacker Justin Houston (knee), Johnson (ruptured left Achilles) and defensive end Allen Bailey (torn pectoral) — to injury.

The Chiefs' $101 million man, Houston, led the NFL with 22 sacks in 2014, but a knee injury cost him 16 games the last two seasons. He returned early from a February 2016 ACL repair, but Kansas City expects the best version of the QB menace in 2017.

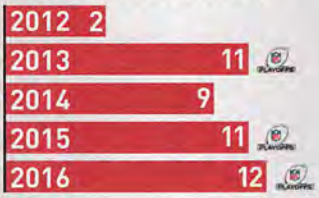
THE ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN/CEO: Clark Hunt
PRESIDENT: Mark Donovan
GENERAL MANAGER: John Dorsey
DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION: Trip MacCracken
STADIUM: Arrowhead Stadium (76,416)
SURFACE: Latitude 36 Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.kcchiefs.com
TICKETS: 816-920-9400
TRAINING CAMP: Missouri Western State University (St. Joseph, Mo.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Andy Reid
RECORD WITH TEAM: 43–21
CAREER RECORD: 173–114–1
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Matt Nagy
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Bob Sutton
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Dave Toub
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH: Brad Childress
RUNNING BACKS: Eric Bieniemy
WIDE RECEIVERS: Greg Lewis
TIGHT ENDS: Tom Melvin
OFFENSIVE LINE: Andy Heck
DEFENSIVE LINE: Britt Reid
LINEBACKERS: Gary Gibbs
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Emmitt Thomas
CORNERBACKS: Al Harris

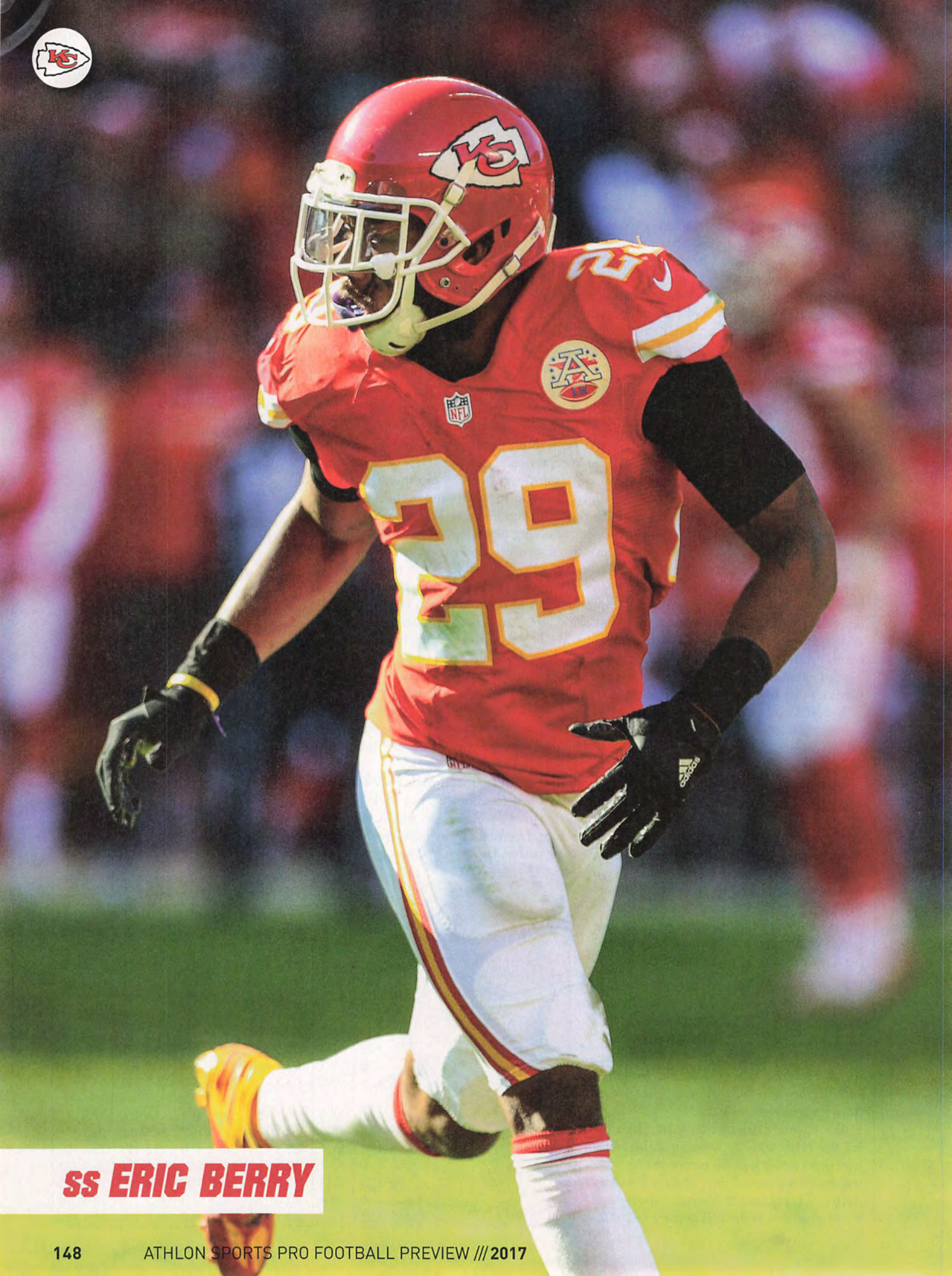
FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 7	at New England (Thu.)	8:30	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Sept. 17	Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Sept. 24	at L.A. Chargers	4:25	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Oct. 2	Washington (Mon.)	8:30	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Oct. 8	at Houston	8:30	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Oct. 15	Pittsburgh	4:25	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Oct. 19	at Oakland (Thu.)	8:25	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Oct. 30	Denver (Mon.)	8:30	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Nov. 5	at Dallas	4:25	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
BYE							
Nov. 19	at N.Y. Giants	1:00	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Nov. 26	Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Dec. 3	at N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Dec. 10	Oakland	1:00	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Dec. 16	L.A. Chargers (Sat.)	8:25	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Dec. 24	Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Dec. 31	at Denver	4:25	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)

2016 NFL RANKINGS



SS ERIC BERRY

2016 RESULTS (12-4)

Sept. 11	L.A. Chargers (ot)	W	33-27
Sept. 18	at Houston	L	12-19
Sept. 25	N.Y. Jets	W	24-3
Oct. 2	at Pittsburgh	L	14-43
Oct. 16	at Oakland	W	26-10
Oct. 23	New Orleans	W	27-21
Oct. 30	at Indianapolis	W	30-14
Nov. 6	Jacksonville	W	19-14
Nov. 13	at Carolina	W	20-17
Nov. 20	Tampa Bay	L	17-19
Nov. 27	at Denver (ot)	W	30-27
Dec. 4	at Atlanta	W	29-28
Dec. 8	Oakland	W	21-13
Dec. 18	Tennessee	L	17-19
Dec. 25	Denver	W	33-10
Jan. 1	at L.A. Chargers	W	37-27
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 15	Pittsburgh	L	16-18

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Alex Smith	489	328	3,502	15	8
Nick Foles	55	36	410	3	0
RUSHING	**ATT**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
Spencer Ware	214		921	4.3	3
Charcandrick West	88		293	3.3	1
Tyreek Hill	24		267	11.1	3
RECEIVING	**REC**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
Travis Kelce	85		1,125	13.2	4
Tyreek Hill	61		593	9.7	6
Jeremy Maclin	44		536	12.2	2
Chris Conley	44		530	12.0	0
Spencer Ware	33		447	13.5	2
Albert Wilson	31		279	9.0	2

KICKING: Cairo Santos, 31-35 FGs, 36-39 PAT, 129 points
TACKLES: Derrick Johnson, 90; Eric Berry, 77
SACKS: Dee Ford, 10.0; Justin Houston, 4.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Marcus Peters, 6; Eric Berry, 4

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	343.0	20	10
Rushing	109.2	15	10
Passing	233.8	19	8
Scoring	24.3	13	6
Third Down %	38.0	T18	T9
Punt Returns	14.8	1	1
Kick Returns	23.6	9	5

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	368.5	24	12
Rushing	121.1	26	12
Passing	247.4	18	11
Scoring	19.4	7	3
Interceptions	18	T1	T1
Sacks	28	28	13
Turnover Differential	+16	T1	T1

MARCUS PETERS

On the other side in Sutton's 3-4 system, Hali is no longer an every-down guy, but he still has a place with his motor and locker-room presence in rotation with Dee Ford, who had a breakthrough season with 10 sacks.

Johnson — who ruptured his right Achilles' tendon during the 2014 season-opener — didn't miss a beat coming back from injury the first time and is determined to do it again. He'll be paired inside with a seasoned version of Ramik Wilson, who was released after training camp and spent six weeks on the Chiefs' practice squad before starting the final 11 games and finishing third on the team in tackles (76) in 2016.

The return of Bailey — a hulked-out 5-technique who averaged nearly 40 tackles and five sacks in two previous seasons as a starter — bolsters a unit that lost Pro Bowler Dontari Poe. Nose tackle Bennie Logan, who spent the last four seasons in Philadelphia, was signed to anchor the three-man front. Regarded as a fierce run-stopper, Logan (6'2", 315) isn't as hefty as Poe (6'3", 346), but he could thrive in Kansas City's 3-4 system. He averaged 56 tackles in 2014-15 in a similar scheme, but his production lagged when the Eagles' new regime switched to a 4-3 last season. Second-year pro Chris Jones (28 tackles, two sacks as a rookie) is the frontrunner for the other end spot, but the progression of second-round pick Tanoh Kpassagnon (Villanova) bears monitoring in training camp.

The Chiefs' secondary is in great shape, anchored by five-time Pro Bowler and two-time reigning first-team All-Pro strong safety Eric Berry, who signed a massive offseason contract extension less than two years after beating cancer. Berry has averaged 78 tackles and three interceptions in his five full NFL seasons with a propensity for game-changing plays, such as the point-scoring INTs at Carolina and Atlanta last season that turned around Kansas City's fortunes. Once a coverage liability, Berry has improved against the pass but remains at his best as a downhill-charging thumper paired on the back end with the versatile Ron Parker, a converted cornerback turned steady and underrated free safety.

It's up for debate whether Berry or Marcus Peters, one of the NFL's top shutdown corners, is the team's best defensive back. Peters has snagged a league-best 14 interceptions since joining the NFL, allowing Kansas City to play more man coverage than any other team in the league. He's highly competitive, and the Chiefs feed off that fire.

Steven Nelson logged the third-most snaps for Kansas City's defense last season opposite Peters. He's something of a Swiss Army Knife, sliding inside for the nickel sub-package with Terrance Mitchell as the second boundary corner. Mitchell was productive with six passes defended in seven games. Phillips Gaines and Kenneth Acker provide veteran depth.

SPECIALISTS The Chiefs have the league's most dynamic return specialist in Hill, who scored an NFL-best three return touchdowns and led the league with a 15.2-yard punt return average as a rookie. Hill — who has clocked a 4.24-second 40-yard dash — was a controversial addition in 2016 because of a prior conviction for domestic assault and battery by strangulation of his then-pregnant girlfriend in December 2014, but there's nothing controversial about his game-breaking ability.

Punter Dustin Colquitt boasts a net average of better than 40 yards in each of the last six seasons and hasn't had a punt returned for a touchdown since 2012. Fourth-year Tulane product Cairo Santos is the most accurate kicker in Chiefs history at 84.3 percent.

FINAL ANALYSIS Staying healthy is imperative, but Dorsey has constructed a deep roster, and Reid has shown he can navigate into the playoffs. But the Chiefs are 1–3 in the postseason under Reid and must advance further or risk a minor rebuild, turning the reins over to Mahomes as part of a youth movement. Expect the lame-duck Raiders to mount the biggest challenge to the Chiefs' AFC West supremacy.

Berry: Tim Umphrey; Peters: Scott Halleran/Getty Images

2017 VETERAN CHIEFS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
9 Bray, Tyler	QB	6-6	215	4	Tennessee	FA-13	FA-KC-13
11 Smith, Alex	QB	6-4	217	12	Utah	T-SF-13	D1-SF-05
8 Stave, Joel	QB	6-4	230	1	Wisconsin	FA-16	FA-Min-16
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
43 Ratelle, Will	FB	5-9	256	1	North Dakota	FA-17	FA-Atl-16
31 Reaves, Darrin	RB	5-10	215	2	UAB	FA-15	FA-Car-14
42 Sherman, Anthony	FB	5-10	242	6	Connecticut	T-Ari-13	D5-Ari-11
26 Spiller, C.J.	RB	5-11	200	8	Clemson	FA-17	D1-Buf-10
32 Ware, Spencer	RB	5-10	229	3	LSU	FA-14	D6-Sea-13
35 West, Charcandrick	RB	5-10	205	3	Abilene Christian	FA-14	FA-KC-14
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
17 Conley, Chris	WR	6-3	205	2	Georgia	D3a-15	D3a-KC-15
89 Escobar, Gavin	TE	6-6	260	4	San Diego State	FA-Dal-17	D2-Dal-13
85 Hammond Jr., Frankie	WR	6-1	184	3	Florida	FA-13	FA-KC-13
84 Harris, Demetrius	TE	6-7	230	3	Wisc.-Milwaukee	FA-13	FA-KC-13
10 Hill, Tyreek	WR	5-10	185	1	West Alabama	D5b-16	D5b-KC-16
15 Jones, Seantavius	WR	6-3	200	1	Valdosta State	FA-16	FA-NO-14
87 Kelce, Travis	TE	6-5	260	4	Cincinnati	D3a-13	D3a-KC-13
19 Maclin, Jeremy	WR	6-0	198	8	Missouri	FA-Phi-15	D1-Phi-09
80 O'Shaughnessy, James	TE	6-4	245	2	Illinois State	D5b-15	D5b-KC-15
14 Robinson, Demarcus	WR	6-1	203	1	Florida	D4c-16	D4c-KC-16
13 Thomas, De'Anthony	WR	5-8	176	3	Oregon	D4-14	D4-KC-14
88 Travis, Ross	TE	6-7	235	1	Penn State	FA-15	FA-KC-15
12 Wilson, Albert	WR	5-9	200	3	Georgia State	FA-14	FA-KC-14
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
62 Battle, Isaiah	OL	6-7	290	1	Clemson	FA-17	SD5-LAR-15
67 Cheek, Joseph	OL	6-7	311	1	Texas A&M	FA-16	FA-NO-16
65 Devey, Jordan	G	6-6	320	3	Memphis	W-SF-16	FA-Bal-13
76 Duvernay-Tardif, Laurent	G	6-5	321	3	McGill	D6b-14	D6b-KC-14
79 Ehinger, Parker	OL	6-6	310	1	Cincinnati	D4a-16	D4a-KC-16
72 Fisher, Eric	T	6-7	315	4	Central Michigan	D1-13	D1-KC-13
73 Fulton, Zach	OL	6-5	316	3	Tennessee	D6a-14	D6a-KC-14
66 James, Josh	OL	6-5	314	1	Carroll	FA-17	FA-GB-16
61 Morse, Mitch	C	6-6	305	2	Missouri	D2-15	D2-KC-15
68 Person, Mike	OL	6-4	300	6	Montana State	FA-16	D7-SF-11
75 Reid, Jah	T	6-7	325	6	UCF	FA-15	D3-Bal-11
71 Schwartz, Mitchell	T	6-5	320	5	California	FA-16	D2-Cle-12
70 Witzmann, Bryan	T	6-7	320	2	South Dakota St.	W-Dal-16	FA-GB-16
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
97 Bailey, Allen	DL	6-3	288	6	Miami	D3b-11	D3b-KC-11
77 Barnes, T.J.	DL	6-7	364	3	Georgia Tech	FA-16	FA-Jac-13
74 Hughes, Montori	DL	6-4	350	4	Tennessee-Martin	FA-17	D5-Ind-13
94 Jenkins, Jarvis	DL	6-4	300	6	Clemson	FA-16	D2-Was-11
60 Johnson, Cory	DT	6-2	298	1	Kentucky	FA-16	FA-Atl-16
95 Jones, Chris	DL	6-6	310	1	Mississippi State	D2-16	D2-KC-16
93 King, David	DL	6-4	281	2	Oklahoma	W-Sea-15	D7-Phi-13
90 Logan, Bennie	DT	6-2	315	4	LSU	FA-Phi-17	D3-Phi-13
99 Nunez-Roches, Rakeem	DL	6-2	307	2	Southern Miss	D6-15	D6-KC-15
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
57 Alexander, D.J.	LB	6-2	233	2	Oregon State	D5a-15	D5a-KC-15
55 Ford, Dee	LB	6-2	252	3	Auburn	D1-14	D1-KC-14
Greene, Khaseem	LB	6-1	241	2	Rutgers	FA-17	D4-Chi-13
91 Hali, Tamba	LB	6-3	275	11	Penn State	D1-06	D1-KC-06
50 Houston, Justin	LB	6-3	258	6	Georgia	D3-11	D3-KC-11
56 Johnson, Derrick	LB	6-3	242	12	Texas	D1-05	D1-KC-05
59 March-Lillard, Justin	LB	6-0	222	2	Akron	FA-15	FA-KC-15
52 Nicolas, Dadi	LB	6-3	235	1	Virginia Tech	D6b-16	D6b-KC-16
44 Okine, Earl	LB	6-6	290	1	Florida	FA-16	FA-Hou-13
48 Smith, Terrance	LB	6-2	235	1	Florida State	FA-16	FA-KC-16
53 Wilson, Ramik	LB	6-2	237	2	Georgia	D4-15	D4-KC-15
51 Zombo, Frank	LB	6-3	254	7	Central Michigan	FA-13	FA-GB-10
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
27 Acker, Kenneth	CB	6-0	195	3	SMU	T-SF-16	D6-SF-14
Bausby, De'Vante	DB	6-2	190	1	Pittsburg State	FA-Chi-17	FA-KC-15
29 Berry, Eric	S	6-0	212	7	Tennessee	D1-10	D1-KC-10
23 Gaines, Phillip	CB	6-0	193	3	Rice	D3-14	D3-KC-14
43 Hall, Jimmy	S	6-1	230	2	Northwestern	FA-16	FA-Oak-15
48 Harris, Vernon	CB	6-1	197	1	Dartmouth	FA-16	FA-KC-16
25 Huff, Marqueston	S	5-11	196	3	Wyoming	FA-Bal-17	D4-Ten-14
39 Mitchell, Terrance	CB	5-11	190	3	Oregon	FA-16	D7-Dal-14
21 Murray, Eric	DB	5-11	199	1	Minnesota	D4b-16	D4b-KC-16
20 Nelson, Steven	CB	5-11	194	2	Oregon State	D3b-15	D3b-KC-15
38 Parker, Ron	DB	6-0	206	6	Newberry	W-Sea-13	FA-Sea-11
22 Peters, Marcus	CB	6-0	197	2	Washington	D1-15	D1-KC-15
49 Sorensen, Daniel	S	6-2	208	3	BYU	FA-14	FA-KC-14
24 White, D.J.	CB	5-11	193	1	Georgia Tech	D6a-16	D6a-KC-16
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
2 Colquitt, Dustin	P	6-3	210	12	Tennessee	D3-05	D3-KC-05
5 Santos, Cairo	K	5-8	160	3	Tulane	FA-14	FA-KC-14
41 Winchester, James	LS	6-3	240	2	Oklahoma	FA-15	FA-Phi-13

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	19	Jeremy Maclin	10	Tyreek Hill
WR	17	Chris Conley	12	Albert Wilson
LT	72	Eric Fisher	70	Bryan Witzmann
LG	79	Parker Ehinger	68	Mike Person
C	61	Mitch Morse	73	Zach Fulton
RG	76	Laurent Duvernay-Tardif	73	Zach Fulton
RT	71	Mitchell Schwartz	75	Jah Reid
TE	87	Travis Kelce	84	Demetrius Harris
QB	11	Alex Smith	15	Patrick Mahomes II (R)
FB	42	Anthony Sherman	32	Spencer Ware
RB	32	Spencer Ware	27	Kareem Hunt (R)

DEFENSE

DE	97	Allen Bailey	92	Tanoh Kpassagnon (R)
DT	90	Bennie Logan	99	Rakeem Nunez-Roches
DE	95	Chris Jones	94	Jarvis Jenkins
OLB	50	Justin Houston	51	Frank Zombo
ILB	56	Derrick Johnson	59	Justin March-Lillard
ILB	53	Ramik Wilson	48	Terrance Smith
OLB	55	Dee Ford	91	Tamba Hali
CB	22	Marcus Peters	23	Phillip Gaines
CB	20	Steven Nelson	39	Terrance Mitchell
SS	29	Eric Berry	49	Daniel Sorensen
FS	38	Ron Parker	21	Eric Murray

SPECIALISTS

K	5	Cairo Santos	KR	10	Tyreek Hill
P	2	Dustin Colquitt	PR	10	Tyreek Hill

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
TE	Gavin Escobar	Dallas
LB	Khaseem Greene	Detroit
S	Marqueston Huff	Baltimore
DT	Bennie Logan	Philadelphia
RB	C.J. Spiller	N.Y. Jets

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
RB	Jamaal Charles	Denver
QB	Nick Foles	Philadelphia
DE	Jaye Howard	Chicago
TE	James O'Shaughnessy	New England
DT	Dontari Poe	Atlanta

SCOUTING THE CHIEFS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP KANSAS CITY "Andy Reid has consistently proven to be one of the top NFL coaches of this generation with his success in Philadelphia and now Kansas City. The naysayers will point to no Super Bowl wins, and that is the very reason they boldly moved up in the first round to grab quarterback Patrick Mahomes of Texas Tech. ... Alex Smith is ideal in this West Coast system, but he might be too conservative with the football to get the Chiefs past New England in the AFC, hence the 'redshirt' for Mahomes in 2017 with an eye toward inserting him into the lineup as a second-year pro. ... Running back Spencer Ware had 921 yards last year, but I predict rookie Kareem Hunt makes a significant contribution. ... Tight end Travis Kelce is one of the best in the league, period. ... The offensive line is adequate as a collective unit, but left tackle Eric Fisher is just not good enough. ... Jeremy Maclin is still their go-to guy, but the Tyreek Hill gamble paid off with his 61 catches and six touchdowns as a rookie. ... Defensively, Kansas City let Dontari Poe walk and added Bennie Logan from the Eagles. ... The coaching staff expects Chris Jones to dominate on the inside with Tamba Hali and Justin Houston on the edges. However, Dee Ford is their best pass rusher now, and he played extremely well in 2016 with 10 sacks. ... Linebacker Derrick Johnson suffered his second Achilles injury in three years, but the position was neglected in the draft. ... Marcus Peters is really gifted at one corner. ... Eric Berry is arguably the NFL's best safety and continues to play at an elite level. ... I anticipate the Alex Smith critique to take its toll on this team. With an ordinary run game and shaky linebackers, they look like playoff contenders but once again only Super Bowl pretenders."

Tim Umphrey

CHIEFS IN THE *DRAFT*

C-

RD PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1. Patrick Mahomes II	QB	6-3	230	Texas Tech
2. Tanoh Kpassagnon	DE	6-7	280	Villanova
3. Kareem Hunt	RB	5-11	216	Toledo
4. Jehu Chesson	WR	6-3	203	Michigan
5. Ukeme Eligwe	OLB	6-2	239	Georgia Southern
6. Leon McQuay III	DB	6-2	185	USC

General manager John Dorsey traded up for three of the Chiefs' first four picks. The first-round swap with Buffalo perhaps netted a future franchise quarterback in Patrick Mahomes II, who has a big arm but will need at least a year to learn and develop after playing in an Air Raid attack at Texas Tech. He'll get that chance under Andy Reid's tutelage and behind veteran Alex Smith. Tanoh Kpassagnon is a physical freak and immediately bolsters the defensive line. He will have to adjust to the big jump in competition after playing at FCS Villanova. Kareem Hunt, who rushed for 1,475 yards as a senior at Toledo, inherits Jamaal Charles' role. Jehu Chesson could be a steal. Ukeme Eligwe and Leon McQuay are developmental prospects who will have to make contributions on special teams to make the roster in 2017.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

BERRY STRONG Cancer survivor Eric Berry signed a six-year, $78 million contract extension in February 2017 just 27 months after being diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma. As valuable as Berry's on-field production has been — 427 tackles with 14 interceptions, including five returned for touchdowns in 86 career games — his inspiration and respected locker-room voice might be more important.

ALL-CLASS ALEX Shortly after the Chiefs selected Patrick Mahomes II as his presumed replacement, Alex Smith called and congratulated the former Texas Tech quarterback. "He said he's going to be there in my corner and teach me as I go," Mahomes said of Smith's call during his introductory press conference. "It's the type of guy he is. He's a great leader."

KELCE CATCHING Spending the 2016 offseason filming a dating show, "Catching Kelce," for E! Entertainment Television didn't hurt tight end Travis Kelce's on-field production. The fifth-year veteran from Cincinnati returned to the Pro Bowl and was chosen first-team All-Pro after posting career-highs with 85 receptions for 1,125 yards. His relationship with "Catching Kelce" winner Maya Benberry was ... um ... less successful.

MAKING MAHOMES The legend of Mahomes, who averaged 4,853 yards and 39 touchdowns the last two seasons at Texas Tech, traces to his days as a 5-year-old pee-wee baseball player when he broke a kid's glasses (and maybe his nose) with a throw from shortstop. His father, former major league pitcher Pat Mahomes, says: "He came out of the womb throwing the ball."

TY-REEK! TY-REEK! Tyreek Hill returned only 14 kickoffs last season, but 11 of those went for at least 20 yards — a healthy 78.6-percent clip. Only Dallas' Lucky Whitehead (88.2 percent), Seattle's Tyler Lockett (82.6) and Minnesota's Cordarrelle Patterson (80.0) were consistently as explosive.

SOARING SORENSON Primarily a special teamer during his first two seasons, Daniel Sorenson found his footing with the defense last season. He racked up 63 tackles, three interceptions (one for a touchdown), six passes deflections, three fumble recoveries and two forced fumbles. His reward — a four-year, $16 million contract extension.

'HUNT' FOR CHARLES' REPLACEMENT Jamaal Charles, a former third-round pick, amassed the most rushing yards in Chiefs history. He's in Denver now, but the Chiefs hope another third-round pick can prove equally productive. Scouts rave about Kareem Hunt's balance and power. The Toledo graduate compares favorably to Frank Gore.

PUDDLE JUMPING Smith's preference for short, safe throws crystallizes with an average of 3.23 air yards per attempt, which ranked 33rd among 36 NFL quarterbacks who threw for at least 1,000 yards in 2016. Maybe a healthy Maclin and a better rapport with Hill will lead to more shots downfield.

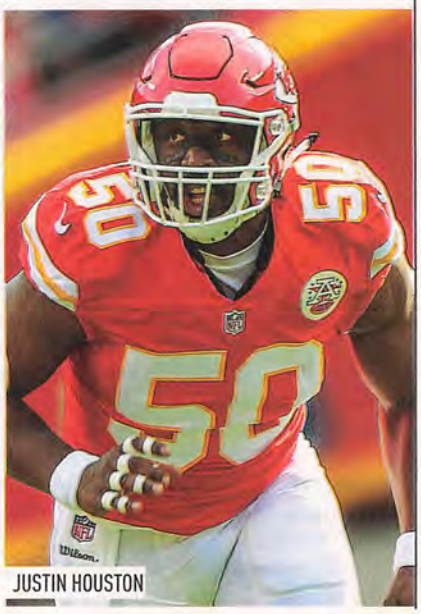
SPELLCHECK The Chiefs' 2017 Draft is littered with tongue-twisters. Take second-round pick Tanoh Kpassagnon. He's a 6'7", 280-pound defensive end who exploded for a 30-inch vertical and 10'8" broad jump at the NFL Combine, but the name's a spellcheck nightmare. The same is true for receiver Jehu Chesson (Michigan) and linebacker Ukeme Eligwe (Georgia Southern).

NUMBERS TO KNOW

74 Opponents ran the ball up the middle on the Chiefs on a league-high 74 percent of their carries.

16.7 The Chiefs forced turnovers on a league-high 16.7 percent of their defensive drives.

11.8 Kansas City finished tied for second in the league in broken tackles as an offense, creating them on 11.8 percent of offensive snaps.



JUSTIN HOUSTON

LOS ANGELES CHARGERS

AFC WEST FORECAST

4

After years of posturing and threats, the Chargers finally pulled the plug on San Diego after 56 seasons and moved to the Los Angeles area because voters said no to a large subsidy to replace aging Qualcomm Stadium. They leave behind what had been a loyal fan base and enter an already crowded market where fans are known to be fickle and demand a winning product.

Technically, the Chargers won't be in L.A.; their headquarters will be in Costa Mesa in Orange County, and they'll play for two seasons in a 30,000-seat soccer stadium in Carson before moving into the stadium that Rams owner Stan Kroenke is building in Inglewood. They'll have a new coach, Anthony Lynn, as they try to regroup after winning only nine games the last two years. Unless they win right away, they could struggle for attention in a vast market where the most popular teams are the Dodgers, Lakers, USC football, UCLA basketball, the Kings, Clippers, Rams, Ducks and Angels.

OFFENSE There's a lot to like about the Chargers' offense, if only it could stay healthy. There are plenty of playmakers, but they can't seem to stay on the field together very long.

The one guy the Chargers can ill afford to lose, for any length of time, is quarterback Philip Rivers. While he doesn't seem overly excited about the move to L.A., Rivers is willing to give it a go and is trying to win the support of new fans while trying to keep some of the old fans who weren't totally turned off by team chairman Dean Spanos' actions the last two years. While Rivers is coming off another 4,000-yard passing season, he led the NFL with 21 interceptions and will have to reduce that number to help give the Bolts a chance.

Rivers showed his usual leadership as he tried his best to hold things together as the receiving corps was depleted by a season-ending knee injury to Keenan Allen in Week 1. The Chargers gave Rivers another playmaker when they took Clemson receiver Mike Williams with the seventh overall pick in the draft, and then they gave him some help up front by drafting guards Forrest Lamp and Dan Feeney. The Chargers finally appear to be addressing their ongoing offensive line concerns. The line last season was beset by injuries and poor performances. Before the draft, general manager Tom Telesco released left tackle King Dunlap and right guard D.J. Fluker and signed free-agent left tackle Russell Okung. Fluker and center Chris Watt were among Telesco's recent draft mistakes, and both are gone. However, center Matt Slauson was a strong addition last year, and the Bolts will look for a big contribution from Max Tuerk, who was drafted a year ago despite coming off an injury in his final season at USC. Lamp and Feeney could challenge immediately for starting jobs at guard, though both can also play tackle. That means left guard Orlando Franklin and right tackle Joe Barksdale have to play better, whether it's committing fewer penalties or figuring out how to stay healthy.

Williams is a definite upgrade and will start opposite the oft-injured Allen, who has been limited to nine games and four TDs in the last two seasons (knee injury in 2016, lacerated kidney in 2015).

There should be nothing but positives from running back Melvin Gordon, who bounced back from a woeful rookie season to rush for 997 yards and score 12 touchdowns. But his season was cut short by hip and knee injuries. The Bolts are certainly going to miss Danny Woodhead's change-of-pace play, both rushing and receiving, although he was injury-prone. Star tight end Antonio Gates returns for his 15th season, as motivated as ever to win an elusive championship. His next TD catch will be his 112th, giving him sole possession of the NFL record for tight ends. If this is Gates' final season, the Chargers are in good shape, because Hunter Henry, part of Telesco's solid draft class from 2016, had a strong rookie season with 36 catches for 478 yards and eight touchdowns. Henry has also impressed offensive coordinator Ken Whisenhunt with his blocking.

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER: Alex G. Spanos
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD: Dean A. Spanos
PRESIDENT-FOOTBALL OPERATIONS: John Spanos
GENERAL MANAGER: Tom Telesco
STADIUM: StubHub Center (30,000)
SURFACE: Grass
WEBSITE: www.chargers.com
TICKETS: 877-CHARGERS
TRAINING CAMP: Jack R. Hammett Sports Complex (Costa Mesa, CA)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Anthony Lynn
RECORD WITH TEAM: 0–0
CAREER RECORD: 0–1
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Ken Whisenhunt
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Gus Bradley
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR/ASSISTANT HEAD COACH: George Stewart
QUARTERBACKS: Shane Steichen
RUNNING BACKS: Alfredo Roberts
WIDE RECEIVERS: Nick Sirianni
TIGHT ENDS: John McNulty
OFFENSIVE LINE: Pat Meyer
DEFENSIVE LINE: Giff Smith
LINEBACKERS: Richard Smith
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Ron Milus

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 11	at Denver (Mon.)	10:20	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Sept. 17	Miami	4:05	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Sept. 24	Kansas City	4:25	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Oct. 1	Philadelphia	4:05	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Oct. 8	at N.Y. Giants	1:00	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Oct. 15	at Oakland	4:25	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Oct. 22	Denver	4:25	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Oct. 29	at New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
BYE							
Nov. 12	at Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Nov. 19	Buffalo	4:05	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Nov. 23	at Dallas (Thu.)	4:30	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Dec. 3	Cleveland	4:05	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Dec. 10	Washington	4:05	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Dec. 16	at Kansas City (Sat.)	8:25	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Dec. 24	at N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Dec. 31	Oakland	4:25	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)

Peter Brouillet

DE JOEY BOSA

2016 RESULTS (5-11)

Sept. 11	at Kansas City (ot)	L	27-33
Sept. 18	Jacksonville	W	38-14
Sept. 25	at Indianapolis	L	22-26
Oct. 2	New Orleans	L	34-35
Oct. 9	at Oakland	L	31-34
Oct. 13	Denver	W	21-13
Oct. 23	at Atlanta (ot)	W	33-30
Oct. 30	at Denver	L	19-27
Nov. 6	Tennessee	W	43-35
Nov. 13	Miami	L	24-31
Nov. 27	at Houston	W	21-13
Dec. 4	Tampa Bay	L	21-28
Dec. 11	at Carolina	L	16-28
Dec. 18	Oakland	L	16-19
Dec. 24	at Cleveland	L	17-20
Jan. 1	Kansas City	L	27-37

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Philip Rivers	578	349	4,386	33	21
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Melvin Gordon	254	997	3.9	10	
Kenneth Farrow	60	192	3.2	0	
Danny Woodhead	19	116	6.1	0	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Tyrell Williams	69	1,059	15.3	7	
Dontrelle Inman	58	810	14.0	4	
Antonio Gates	53	548	10.3	7	
Travis Benjamin	47	677	14.4	4	
Melvin Gordon	41	419	10.2	2	
Hunter Henry	36	478	13.3	8	

KICKING: Josh Lambo, 26-32 FGs, 42-46 PAT, 120 points
TACKLES: Jatavis Brown, 79; Korey Toomer, 75
SACKS: Joey Bosa, 10.5; Melvin Ingram, 8.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Casey Hayward, 7; Trovon Reed, 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	356.8	14	7
Rushing	94.4	26	14
Passing	262.4	8	4
Scoring	25.6	9	4
Third Down %	42.5	9	4
Punt Returns	6.6	27	13
Kick Returns	18.1	30	16

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	347.1	16	8
Rushing	97.9	10	4
Passing	249.2	20	12
Scoring	26.4	29	15
Interceptions	18	T1	T1
Sacks	35	T14	5
Turnover Differential	-7	T26	T13

PHILIP RIVERS

DEFENSE Joey Bosa served notice that he is going to be a force to deal with for years to come. He was named Defensive Rookie of the Year after recording 10.5 sacks in 12 games. When he wasn't collecting sacks, he was drawing double teams and otherwise causing mayhem, both against the pass and the run. Fans were left to wonder what could have happened had Bosa, the No. 3 pick overall, played a full season. He missed all of training camp in a contract dispute with the Spanos family and then pulled a hamstring, causing him to miss the first four games. Three of those games were close losses. Having Bosa from the start of the season will help this unit set the tone. Bosa gives new defensive coordinator Gus Bradley a cornerstone for a new 4-3 alignment, although there will still be some elements of the 3-4 that the Chargers have run for years.

Although he's a threat from pretty much wherever he lines up, Bosa is looking forward to rushing more from outside the tight end. He and outside linebacker Melvin Ingram can give the Chargers a lethal pass rush. Ingram played well enough last year, with eight sacks, that the Chargers gave him the franchise tag.

While Bosa is the force up front, cornerback Casey Hayward is coming off a Pro Bowl season in which he led the NFL with seven interceptions. The Chargers need another great season from Hayward, because the other cornerback, Jason Verrett, can't stay healthy. Verrett has shown he can be one of the NFL's best cover corners, but he's missed 24 of 48 games since being taken in the first round of the 2014 draft.

Inside linebacker Manti Te'o was lost to an injury early in the season and then left for New Orleans as a free agent. However, the Chargers' linebacking corps is probably in better shape, because young players Jatavis Brown and Korey Toomer played well when given more playing time.

SPECIALISTS Special teams remain an adventure with the Chargers, and not in a good way. The Chargers lost to previously winless Cleveland 20–17 on Christmas Eve in a painful performance that will be remembered for Josh Lambo's 45-yard miss as time expired. That came a few minutes after Cleveland blocked Lambo's 32-yard attempt. Another special teams gaffe contributed to a 34–31 loss at Oakland when holder Drew Kaser, the punter, lost the handle on the snap as Lambo lined up to attempt a game-tying 36-yarder in the closing minutes. Kaser was replaced as the holder by backup quarterback Kellen Clemens. Kaser and Lambo return, as does long snapper Mike Windt.

The return game also remains unremarkable, even after the Chargers signed Travis Benjamin, who had a couple of critical turnovers. They tried Dexter McCluster, but he broke a forearm moving luggage at home. Benjamin remains on the roster, although Isaiah Burse got the bulk of the return work last year and will be in the mix this season.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Chargers were roundly ridiculed for the "Fight For L.A." slogan they introduced immediately after announcing they were relocating. In retrospect, that's what it's going to take, both on and off the field. Most important, the Chargers have to win in order to capture the imagination and support of the fans in Los Angeles. It's not going to be easy. They have the third-toughest schedule (opponents' winning percentage of .568 in 2016), and there certainly will be plenty of distractions involved with the relocation process. Everything will be new: training camp at a community sports complex, games in a soccer stadium, finding a place to live and then dealing with new routines and notoriously bad L.A.-area traffic.

So far, Lynn seems to be the kind of coach who can keep it all together. But Los Angeles fans are an unforgiving lot and care only about wins and losses, not cute slogans and free Philip Rivers jerseys for season ticket holders.

Peter Brouillet

2017 VETERAN CHARGERS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
6 Bercovici, Mike	QB	6-0	204	1	Arizona State	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
10 Clemens, Kellen	QB	6-2	220	11	Oregon	FA-LAR-14	D2-NYJ-06
17 Rivers, Philip	QB	6-5	228	13	NC State	T-NYG-04	D1-NYG-04
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
Barner, Kenjon	RB	5-9	195	3	Oregon	FA-Phi-17	D6-Car-13
27 Farrow, Kenneth	RB	5-9	219	1	Houston	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
28 Gordon, Melvin	RB	6-1	215	2	Wisconsin	D1-15	D1-LAC-15
32 Oliver, Branden	RB	5-8	208	3	Buffalo	FA-14	FA-SD-14
34 Watt, Derek	FB	6-2	234	1	Wisconsin	D6-16	D6-LAC-16
44 Williams, Andre	RB	6-0	220	3	Boston College	W-NYG-16	D4-NYG-14
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
13 Allen, Keenan	WR	6-2	211	4	California	D3-13	D3-LAC-13
12 Benjamin, Travis	WR	5-10	175	5	Miami	FA-Cle-16	D4a-Cle-12
81 Brown, Da'Ron	WR	6-0	199	1	Northern Illinois	FA-17	D7-KC-15
89 Burse, Isaiah	WR	5-10	187	2	Fresno State	FA-15	FA-Den-14
45 Cleveland, Asante	TE	6-5	260	2	Miami	W-NE-15	FA-SF-14
87 Cumberland, Jeff	TE	6-4	260	7	Illinois	FA-NYJ-16	FA-NYJ-10
81 Davis, Geremy	WR	6-3	211	2	Connecticut	FA-16	D6-NYG-15
85 Gates, Antonio	TE	6-4	255	14	Kent State	FA-03	FA-LAC-03
86 Henry, Hunter	TE	6-5	250	1	Arkansas	D2-16	D2-LAC-16
15 Inman, Dontrelle	WR	6-3	205	3	Virginia	FA-14	FA-Jac-11
1 Jones, Jamaal	WR	6-1	192	1	Montana	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
84 McGrath, Sean	TE	6-5	259	2	Henderson State	FA-15	FA-Sea-12
7 Williams, Dom	WR	6-2	200	1	Washington State	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
16 Williams, Tyrell	WR	6-4	205	2	Western Oregon	FA-15	FA-LAC-15
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
72 Barksdale, Joe	T	6-5	326	6	LSU	FA-15	D3-Oak-11
67 Boyko, Brett	T	6-6	301	1	UNLV	FA-16	FA-Phi-15
78 Burwell, Tyreek	T	6-6	310	2	Cincinnati	FA-15	FA-LAC-15
63 Clark, Donavon	G	6-4	315	1	Michigan State	D7-16	D7-LAC-16
74 Franklin, Orlando	G	6-6	315	6	Miami	FA-Den-15	D2b-Den-11
75 Hairston, Chris	G/T	6-6	330	5	Clemson	FA-15	D4b-Buf-11
70 Johnstone, Tyler	T	6-5	301	1	Oregon	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
76 Okung, Russell	T	6-5	310	7	Oklahoma State	FA-Den-17	D1a-Sea-10
73 Pulley, Spencer	C/G	6-4	308	1	Vanderbilt	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
68 Slauson, Matt	C/G	6-5	315	8	Nebraska	FA-16	D6-NYJ-09
62 Tuerk, Max	C	6-5	298	1	USC	D3-16	D3-LAC-16
79 Wiggins, Kenny	G/T	6-6	314	3	Fresno State	FA-15	FA-SF-11
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
99 Bosa, Joey	DE	6-5	280	1	Ohio State	D1-16	D1-LAC-16
91 Carlis, Zamir	DT	6-4	275	1	Stillman	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
90 Carrethers, Ryan	NT	6-1	333	3	Arkansas State	D5-14	D5-LAC-14
51 Emanuel, Kyle	DE	6-3	250	2	North Dakota St.	D5-15	D5-LAC-15
96 Eulls, Kaleb	DT	6-4	309	2	Mississippi State	FA-16	FA-NO-15
94 Liuget, Corey	DT	6-2	300	6	Illinois	D1-11	D1-LAC-11
92 Mebane, Brandon	NT	6-1	311	10	California	FA-Sea-16	D3-Sea-07
95 Palepoi, Tenny	DT	6-1	298	3	Utah	FA-14	FA-LAC-14
93 Philon, Darius	DE	6-1	300	2	Arkansas	D6-15	D6-LAC-15
91 Reid, Caraun	DT	6-2	298	3	Princeton	W-Det-16	D5-Det-14
71 Square, Damion	DT	6-2	293	4	Alabama	W-KC-14	FA-Phi-13
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
97 Attaochu, Jeremiah	OLB	6-3	252	3	Georgia Tech	D2-14	D2-LAC-14
57 Brown, Jatavis	OLB	5-11	221	1	Akron	D5-16	D5-LAC-16
48 Dzubnar, Nick	ILB	6-1	240	2	Cal Poly	FA-15	FA-LAC-15
59 Fields, Carlos	LB	6-1	248	2	Winston-Salem St.	FA-16	FA-Oak-14
54 Ingram, Melvin	OLB	6-2	247	5	South Carolina	D1-12	D1-LAC-12
46 Landrum, Christopher	OLB	6-2	245	1	Jacksonville State	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
40 McCain, Chris	OLB	6-5	236	3	California	FA-16	FA-Mia-14
53 Perry, Joshua	ILB	6-4	253	1	Ohio State	D4-16	D4-LAC-16
52 Perryman, Denzel	ILB	5-11	240	2	Miami	D2-15	D2-LAC-15
56 Toomer, Korey	ILB	6-2	235	3	Idaho	FA-16	D5-Sea-12
58 Williams, Tourek	OLB	6-4	262	4	FIU	D6-13	D6-LAC-13
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
37 Addae, Jahleel	S	5-10	195	4	Central Michigan	FA-13	FA-LAC-13
41 Evans, Randall	CB	6-0	195	1	Kansas State	FA-16	D6-Phi-15
26 Hayward, Casey	CB	5-11	192	5	Vanderbilt	FA-GB-16	D2b-GB-12
49 Lee, Mike	CB	6-1	185	1	Fort Valley State	FA-16	FA-Atl-15
20 Lowery, Dwight	S	5-11	212	9	San Jose State	FA-Ind-16	D4-NYJ-08
29 Mager, Craig	CB	5-11	200	2	Texas State	D3-15	D3-LAC-15
23 McCoil, Dexter	S	6-4	220	1	Tulsa	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
30 McDonald, Adrian	S	5-9	190	1	Houston	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
31 Phillips, Adrian	S	5-11	210	2	Texas	FA-14	FA-LAC-14
38 Reed, Trovon	CB	6-0	191	1	Auburn	FA-16	FA-LAR-15
25 Stuckey, Darrell	S	5-11	212	7	Kansas	D4-10	D4-LAC-10
22 Verrett, Jason	CB	5-10	188	3	TCU	D1-14	D1-LAC-14
42 Williams, Trevor	CB	5-11	191	1	Penn State	FA-16	FA-LAC-16
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
8 Kaser, Drew	P	6-2	206	1	Texas A&M	D6-16	D6-LAC-16
2 Lambo, Josh	K	6-0	215	2	Texas A&M	FA-15	FA-LAC-15
47 Windt, Mike	LS	6-1	237	7	Cincinnati	FA-10	FA-Cin-10

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	13	Keenan Allen	16	Tyrell Williams
WR		Mike Williams (R)	15	Dontrelle Inman
LT	76	Russell Okung	79	Kenny Wiggins
LG	66	Dan Feeney (R)	74	Orlando Franklin
C	68	Matt Slauson	62	Max Tuerk
RG	77	Forrest Lamp (R)	73	Spencer Pulley
RT	72	Joe Barksdale	75	Chris Hairston
TE	85	Antonio Gates	86	Hunter Henry
QB	17	Philip Rivers	10	Kellen Clemens
RB	28	Melvin Gordon	32	Branden Oliver
FB	34	Derek Watt		

DEFENSE

DE	99	Joey Bosa	71	Damion Square
DT	92	Brandon Mebane	95	Tenny Palepoi
DT	94	Corey Liuget	90	Ryan Carrethers
DE	51	Kyle Emanuel	93	Darius Philon
OLB	57	Jatavis Brown	46	Chris Landrum
MLB	52	Denzel Perryman	56	Korey Toomer
OLB	54	Melvin Ingram	97	Jeremiah Attaochu
CB	22	Jason Verrett	29	Craig Mager
CB	26	Casey Hayward	42	Trevor Williams
FS	20	Dwight Lowery	33	Rayshawn Jenkins (R)
SS	37	Jahleel Addae	31	Adrian Phillips

SPECIALISTS

K	2	Josh Lambo	KR		Kenjon Barner
P	8	Drew Kaser	PR	12	Travis Benjamin

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
RB	Kenjon Barner	Philadelphia
OT	Russell Okung	Denver

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
OT	King Dunlap	Free Agent
OG	D.J. Fluker	N.Y. Giants
ILB	Manti Te'o	New Orleans
RB	Danny Woodhead	Baltimore

SCOUTING THE CHARGERS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP L.A. "The Chargers move to Los Angeles with a new coaching staff and an improved roster that has promise and stability. Anthony Lynn takes over as the head man, despite the fact that his experience has primarily been as a running backs coach. ... He wisely kept Ken Whisenhunt as the offensive coordinator, and the addition of Gus Bradley as the defensive coordinator should increase the energy on that side of the football. ... All Philip Rivers does is pump out big numbers every single year regardless of who is in front of or around him on offense. ... Their run game had marginal improvement from 2015, but Melvin Gordon was much better in his second season. ... Russell Okung was added as the left tackle in free agency after they let King Dunlap walk. ... I really like what they did in the draft with wide receiver Mike Williams, then offensive linemen Forrest Lamp and Dan Feeney, all assets that can help Rivers. ... Antonio Gates still has something left, while Hunter Henry proved to be a wise choice. He caught 36 passes with eight going for touchdowns as a rookie. ... When healthy, Keenan Allen is a prolific playmaker; however, he has been plagued by injuries and has never played 16 games in a season. ... Despite a ridiculously long holdout, Joey Bosa did respond when he reported and finished with 10.5 sacks in 12 games. ... Melvin Ingram has enjoyed back-to-back successful seasons and is a formidable rusher opposite Bosa. ... The defense finished tied for first in interceptions with 18 after the brilliant addition of cornerback Casey Hayward, who had seven picks of his own. ... Sometimes the statistical numbers do reflect what a team is; the Chargers finished 5-11 while ranking 14th in total offense and 16th in total defense. ... If the offensive line jells and Okung holds up for the entire campaign, this team could surprise in a very balanced AFC West."

CHARGERS IN THE DRAFT

B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Mike Williams	WR	6-4	218	Clemson
2.	Forrest Lamp	OG	6-4	309	Western Kentucky
3.	Dan Feeney	OG	6-4	305	Indiana
4.	Rayshawn Jenkins	S	6-1	214	Miami (Fla.)
5.	Desmond King	CB	5-10	201	Iowa
6.	Sam Tevi	OT	6-5	311	Utah
7.	Isaac Rochell	DE	6-4	280	Notre Dame

Philip Rivers and Melvin Gordon should love this draft. Rivers got another playmaking target in Mike Williams, who is expected to line up opposite Keenan Allen. Forrest Lamp and Dan Feeney are big, blue-collar types who are expected to contribute immediately and upgrade an offensive line that has to improve for this team to be a factor. Coach Anthony Lynn wants a stronger running game to give the offense a bit more balance. Observers expected the Chargers to take a safety in the first round, but they waited until the fourth, when they got Rayshawn Jenkins. He showed fight, literally, when he exchanged punches with Grambling's Chad Williams during a Senior Bowl practice. Desmond King was a highly decorated cornerback in college who slipped to the fifth round. Sam Tevi and Isaac Rochell were drafted for depth.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

L.T.'S BACK Not long after LaDainian Tomlinson was elected to the Hall of Fame, he was hired as special assistant to Chargers owner Dean Spanos. Tomlinson raised some eyebrows in San Diego when he suggested that fans there would still be able to support the Chargers because it was "only" an hour-and-a-half drive to Carson. Clearly Tomlinson is not up to speed on traffic on Interstates 5 and 405, because it's incredibly rare when anyone can get from San Diego to the L.A. area that quickly. L.T. promised to have some sort of celebration in San Diego after the Hall of Fame induction.

INTIMACY AT A COST The Chargers are touting the intimacy of StubHub Center, which is the smallest in the NFL at a capacity of about 30,000 seats. That intimacy will come at a price: Season tickets range from $70 to $375 per game, with an average price of $192 per game.

AGELESS ANTONIO With his next TD catch, Antonio Gates will break out of a tie with Tony Gonzalez and own the record for scoring grabs by a tight end with 112. It'll be tough for fans in San Diego to swallow, considering that Gates' first 111 touchdown catches came prior to the relocation. He tied Gonzalez's record in the final game of 2016.

GO-TO GUYS Philip Rivers and Gates have connected on 84 touchdowns, the most in NFL history for a quarterback-tight end tandem. Not surprisingly, they are the team's longest-tenured players. Gates has been a starter since his rookie season of 2003, and Rivers took over as starter in 2006.

BOSA'S STOKED Joey Bosa is happy the Chargers are switching to a 4-3 defense, because that's the scheme he played in at Ohio State. He also likes new defensive coordinator Gus Bradley, whom he met prior to the 2016 draft when Bradley was Jacksonville's head coach and Bosa visited the Jags. What stands out about Bradley is "just his energy," Bosa says. "He's a deep thinker. His positivity and obviously his football knowledge, more importantly than anything. We need a guy to come in and stay positive." Bosa has lined up in a number of positions along the front, but he says he's excited that he'll be used at times to rush the passer by lining up outside the tight end.

FAST RISER Anthony Lynn started the 2016 season as running backs coach of the Buffalo Bills. He was promoted to offensive coordinator after Greg Roman was fired two weeks into the season, and then to interim head coach for the final game after Rex Ryan was fired. That was a 30–10 loss to the Jets, so Lynn will be looking to improve his career percentage. He replaced Mike McCoy, who was fired by the Chargers after going 27–37 in four seasons.

KEY DATES The Chargers' home opener will be against the Dolphins on Sept. 17. The NFL didn't do them any favors by scheduling the Redskins against the Rams at the L.A. Coliseum at the same time. There are three other head-to-head conflicts, including on Dec. 31 when the Chargers host the archrival Raiders in a Relocation Bowl while the Rams host the 49ers.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

7.8 The Chargers finished third to last in the league in broken tackles as an offense, creating them on just 7.8 percent of offensive plays.

24 The Chargers stopped 24 percent of runs against them for no gain or a loss, the fourth-highest rate in the league.

7.6 San Diego tied for fourth in the league for fewest missed tackles, missing them on only 7.6 percent of defensive snaps.

MELVIN GORDON

Williams: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports ; Gordon: Peter Brouillet

OAKLAND RAIDERS

AFC WEST FORECAST

1

The Raiders finished above .500 and returned to the playoffs last year for the first time since 2002, but their season ended on a sour note — and their offseason set the stage for a second messy divorce with Oakland and a planned move to Las Vegas in 2020.

Quarterback Derek Carr broke his right leg on Dec. 24 during a 33–25 win against the Colts. Without Carr, the Raiders lost 24–6 to Denver in their regular-season finale to finish 12–4. Then they lost 27–14 in an AFC wild card playoff game to Houston, teaching coach Jack Del Rio an important lesson about the postseason. "Don't lose your quarterback," Del Rio deadpanned at the NFL Scouting Combine in Indianapolis.

Carr is expected to make a complete recovery, but Del Rio and the lame-duck Raiders will face plenty of uncertainty in the first of what will likely be two more seasons and possibly three at the Oakland Coliseum while their stadium in Las Vegas is built. The Raiders have enjoyed one of the NFL's best home-field advantages, but it's unknown how fans in Oakland will respond now that they've been jilted again.

"There is that element where a certain number [are] disappointed to the point they won't support us anymore," Del Rio said at the NFL Owners Meetings in Phoenix. "That's understandable. We'll have to see what that number is. If it's a lot, we'll adjust that line of thinking. But I would be surprised if that's the case."

OFFENSE The Raiders had one of the NFL's top offenses last season, and it could be even better this year with the addition of former Seahawks running back Marshawn Lynch. The powerful Lynch ended his one-year retirement and signed a two-year deal with his hometown team after being traded to Oakland. Lynch has rushed for 9,112 yards and 74 TDs in nine seasons. He retired after an injury-plagued 2015 season, but if he stays healthy and recaptures his Beast Mode form, Lynch will be an upgrade from Latavius Murray, who signed as a free agent with Minnesota. The combination of Lynch and scatbacks DeAndré Washington and Jalen Richard gives Oakland three dangerous weapons in the backfield. Make that four counting Jamize Olawale, a battering-ram fullback with some running skills.

Carr was putting up MVP-like numbers before his season-ending injury. He threw for 3,937 yards with 28 touchdowns and six interceptions. Carr's passer rating has gone from 76.6 as a rookie to 91.1 in 2015 to 96.7 last season, showing his steady improvement.

Carr's top two receivers — Amari Cooper and Michael Crabtree — each had over 1,000 receiving yards and combined for 172 catches last year. The trio of Carr, Cooper and Crabtree should only get better in their third straight season together. The Raiders gave Carr another inviting target when they signed free agent Cordarrelle Patterson. The 6'2", 220-pound Patterson caught 52 passes for 453 yards — both career highs — last season for Minnesota, which drafted him in the first round in 2013. The Raiders' tight end corps should be better this year, too, with the addition of former Packer Jared Cook and the return of starter Lee Smith from a season-ending broken leg he suffered Oct. 2 against Baltimore. Smith gives Oakland a powerful blocker, while Cook has 303 career catches for 3,880 yards and 17 touchdowns in eight NFL seasons. They join returning starter Clive Walford, who had an up-and-down 2016 season and could see his playing time reduced.

The Raiders' massive offensive line, which was one of the team's strengths last season, returns intact. Left tackle Donald Penn, left guard Kelechi Osemele and center Rodney Hudson made the Pro Bowl last year, and right guard Gabe Jackson was named an alternate. The biggest question mark is at right tackle, where Austin Howard returns after starting 10 games in 2016. The Raiders lost powerful but injury-plagued offensive tackle Menelik Watson to Denver as a free agent but added former Giant Marshall Newhouse, who could push Howard for playing time. They also drafted 6'6", 343-pound offensive tackle David Sharpe out of Florida.

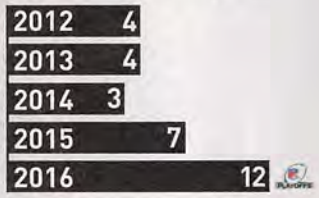
THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER: Mark Davis
GENERAL MANAGER: Reggie McKenzie
DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL ADMIN.: Tom Delaney
DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Joey Clinkscales
STADIUM: Oakland-Alameda County Coliseum (56,063)
SURFACE: Tifway II Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.raiders.com
TICKETS: 800-724-3377
TRAINING CAMP: Napa Valley Training Complex (Napa, Calif.)

THE COACHES

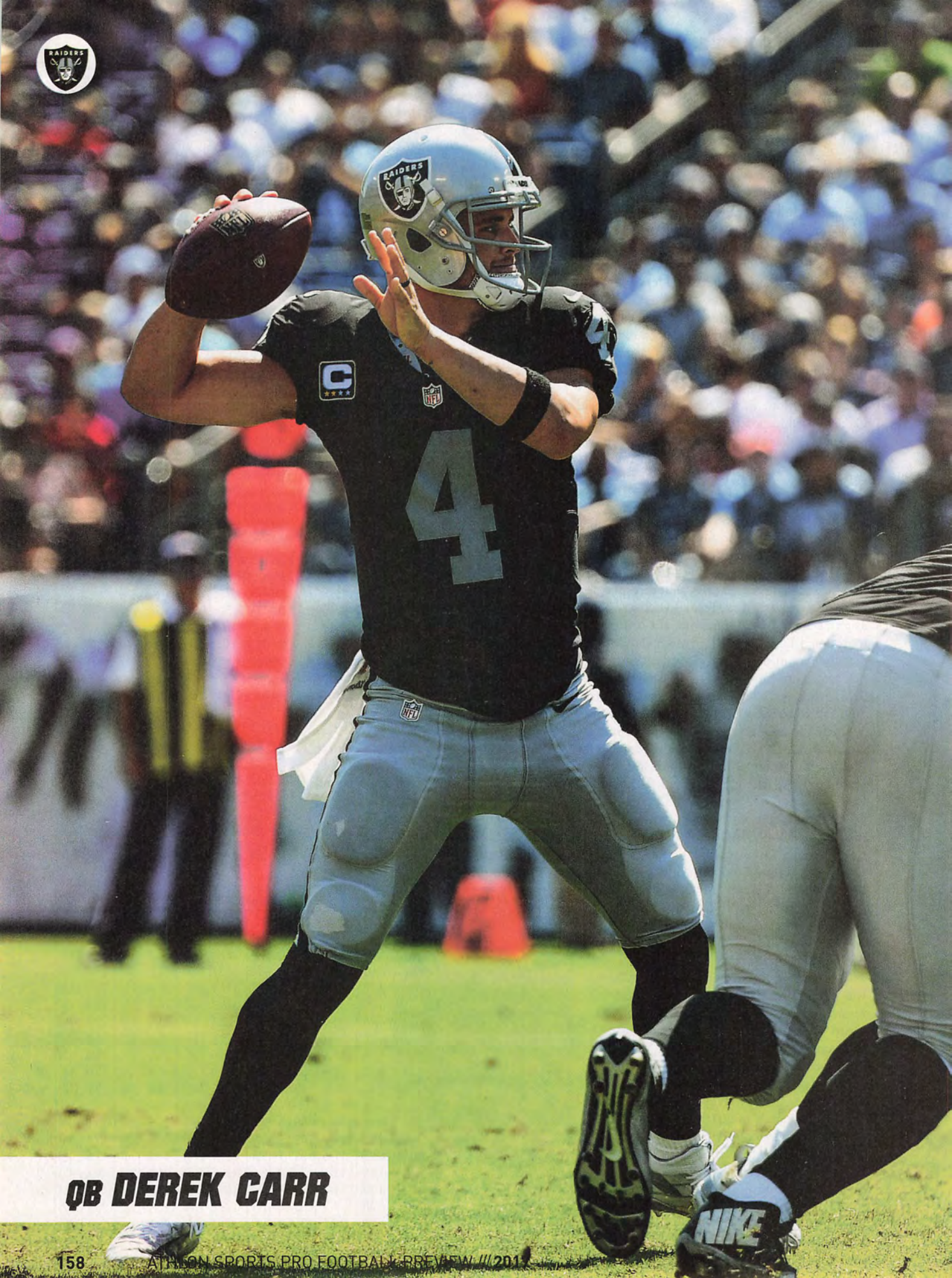
HEAD COACH: Jack Del Rio
RECORD WITH TEAM: 19–13
CAREER RECORD: 87–84
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Todd Downing
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Ken Norton Jr.
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Brad Seely
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/DEFENSE: John Pagano
QUARTERBACKS: Jake Peetz
RUNNING BACKS: Bernie Parmalee
WIDE RECEIVERS: Rob Moore
TIGHT ENDS: Bobby Johnson
OFFENSIVE LINE: Mike Tice
DEFENSIVE LINE: Jethro Franklin
LINEBACKERS: Sal Sunseri
CORNERBACKS: Rod Woodson
SAFETIES: Brent Vieselmeyer

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND



2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
			2016 NFL RANKINGS				
Sept. 10	at Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Sept. 17	N.Y. Jets	4:05	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Sept. 24	at Washington	8:30	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Oct. 1	at Denver	4:25	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Oct. 8	Baltimore	4:05	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Oct. 15	L.A. Chargers	4:25	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Oct. 19	Kansas City (Thu.)	8:25	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Oct. 29	at Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Nov. 5	at Miami	8:30	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
BYE							
Nov. 19	vs. New England (Mexico City)	4:25	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Nov. 26	Denver	4:25	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Dec. 3	N.Y. Giants	4:25	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Dec. 10	at Kansas City	1:00	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Dec. 17	Dallas	8:30	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Dec. 25	at Philadelphia (Mon.)	8:30	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Dec. 31	at L.A. Chargers	4:25	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)



QB DEREK CARR

2016 RESULTS (12-4)

Sept. 11	at New Orleans	W	35-34
Sept. 18	Atlanta	L	28-35
Sept. 25	at Tennessee	W	17-10
Oct. 2	at Baltimore	W	28-27
Oct. 9	L.A. Chargers	W	34-31
Oct. 16	Kansas City	L	10-26
Oct. 23	at Jacksonville	W	33-16
Oct. 30	at Tampa Bay (ot)	W	30-24
Nov. 6	Denver	W	30-20
Nov. 21	Houston	W	27-20
Nov. 27	Carolina	W	35-32
Dec. 4	Buffalo	W	38-24
Dec. 8	at Kansas City	L	13-21
Dec. 18	at L.A. Chargers	W	19-16
Dec. 24	Indianapolis	W	33-25
Jan. 1	at Denver	L	6-24
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 7	at Houston	L	14-27

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Derek Carr	560	357	3,937	28	6
Connor Cook	21	14	150	1	1
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Latavius Murray	195	788	4.0	12	
Jalen Richard	83	491	5.9	1	
DeAndre Washington	87	467	5.4	2	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Michael Crabtree	89	1,003	11.3	8	
Amari Cooper	83	1,153	13.9	5	
Seth Roberts	38	397	10.4	5	
Clive Walford	33	359	10.9	3	
Latavius Murray	33	264	8.0	0	

KICKING: Sebastian Janikowski, 29-35 FGs, 37-39 PAT, 124 points
TACKLES: Malcolm Smith, 103; Khalil Mack, 73
SACKS: Khalil Mack, 11.0; Bruce Irvin, 7.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Reggie Nelson, 5; Three players tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	373.3	6	2
Rushing	120.1	6	3
Passing	253.2	13	6
Scoring	26.0	7	2
Third Down %	38.1	17	8
Punt Returns	9.3	11	4
Kick Returns	20.5	T22	11

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	AFC Rank
Total	375.1	26	13
Rushing	117.6	23	10
Passing	257.5	24	14
Scoring	24.1	20	11
Interceptions	16	T9	T5
Sacks	25	32	16
Turnover Differential	+16	T1	T1

AMARI COOPER

After ranking sixth in total offense last season, the Raiders made a change at offensive coordinator, replacing Bill Musgrave, whose contract expired, with quarterbacks coach Todd Downing. Downing received high marks for tutoring Carr the past two seasons, but he has never been an offensive coordinator at any level and has never called plays. Downing has stressed the importance of having a balanced offense, so you can expect the Raiders to run the ball more often this season.

DEFENSE The Raiders ranked 26th in total defense last season and allowed an NFL-worst 6.1 yards per play. Defensive coordinator Ken Norton Jr. kept his job but, apparently, not all of his power. Del Rio hired former Chargers defensive coordinator John Pagano to be his assistant head coach/defense. The Raiders can certainly use Pagano's experience, but time will tell how this move works out and how Norton responds to the pressure.

Defensive end Khalil Mack, the reigning NFL Defensive Player of the Year, returns for his fourth season. Mack had 11 sacks, five forced fumbles, three fumble recoveries and a pick-six last year. Despite Mack's remarkable season, the Raiders finished last in the NFL in sacks with just 25. Outside linebacker Bruce Irvin had seven sacks, and no other Raider had more than 2.5. The Raiders desperately need promising defensive end Mario Edwards to stay healthy after two injury-hampered seasons. They also need more inside push, but defensive tackle Justin Ellis has zero career sacks in three seasons. Rookie tackle Eddie Vanderdoes, a third-round pick from UCLA, could add some push in the middle.

Outside linebacker Jelani Jenkins, a free-agent pickup, missed nine games last year for Miami, but in his previous two seasons he had a combined 27 starts, 181 tackles and 3.5 sacks. The job at middle linebacker appears to be wide open. Ben Heeney started the first two games last year but lost that job and then suffered a season-ending ankle injury in Week 4. Rookie Marquel Lee, a fifth-round pick from Wake Forest, could have a chance to start. But there's also a chance that the Raiders could re-sign Perry Riley Jr., a free agent who started 11 games for them last year at middle linebacker. Cory James, who made five starts as a rookie last season, is another option.

The Raiders ranked 24th against the pass last season, but their veteran secondary gives them some reason for optimism. Free safety Reggie Nelson had a team-high five interceptions and made the Pro Bowl in his first season with the Raiders. Strong safety Karl Joseph had a solid rookie season with 60 tackles and one interception. Starting cornerbacks Sean Smith and David Amerson return, but the Raiders drafted Ohio State cornerback Gareon Conley in the first round, and he could push for a starting job. Safety Obi Melifonwu, a second-round pick from Connecticut, could see time in the nickel defense, using his size to cover tight ends.

SPECIALISTS The Raiders added an explosive weapon to their kickoff return game when they signed Patterson. He led the NFL in kickoff return average in 2013 (32.4), '15 (31.8) and '16 (31.7) and has been named first-team All-Pro twice. Marquette King averaged 48.6 yards per punt last season, second highest in the NFL, and he'll help the Raiders flip field position again this year with his booming punts. Sebastian Janikowski returns for his 18th season and still boasts one of the NFL's strongest kicking legs. Last year he made 29-of-35 attempts and was 26-of-27 from under 50 yards.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Raiders should ride their explosive offense into the playoffs again, assuming Carr stays healthy, but they'll need to improve defensively to make a Super Bowl run. The Raiders, who have the NFL's fourth-toughest schedule, will be tested early with three of their first four games on the road. They'll find out whether their lame-duck status affects their home-field advantage when they host the Jets in Week 2.

Carr: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Cooper: Peter Brouillet

2017 VETERAN RAIDERS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
4 Carr, Derek	QB	6-3	215	3	Fresno State	D2-14	D2-Oak-14
8 Cook, Connor	QB	6-4	217	1	Michigan State	D4-16	D4-Oak-16
3 Manuel, EJ	QB	6-4	237	4	Florida State	FA-Buf-17	D1-Buf-13
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
22 Jones, Taiwan	RB	6-0	195	6	Eastern Wash.	D4b-11	D4b-Oak-11
24 Lynch, Marshawn	RB	5-11	215	9	California	T-Sea-17	D1-Buf-07
49 Olawale, Jamize	RB	6-1	240	4	North Texas	FA-12	FA-Dal-12
30 Richard, Jalen	RB	5-8	207	1	Southern Miss	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
33 Washington, DeAndré	RB	5-8	204	1	Texas Tech	D5-16	D5-Oak-16
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
80 Brent, K.J.	WR	6-3	202	1	Wake Forest	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
87 Cook, Jared	TE	6-5	254	8	South Carolina	FA-GB-17	D3a-Ten-09
89 Cooper, Amari	WR	6-1	210	2	Alabama	D1-15	D1-Oak-15
15 Crabtree, Michael	WR	6-1	215	8	Texas Tech	FA-SF-15	D1-SF-09
84 Helfet, Cooper	TE	6-3	240	3	Duke	FA-16	FA-Sea-12
82 Holmes, Gabe	TE	6-5	255	2	Purdue	FA-15	FA-Oak-15
16 Holton, Johnny	WR	6-1	188	1	Cincinnati	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
19 Mickens, Jaydon	WR	5-10	174	1	Washington	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
85 O'Malley, Ryan	TE	6-6	258	1	Pennsylvania	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
84 Patterson, Cordarrelle	WR	6-2	220	4	Tennessee	FA-Min-17	D1c-Min-13
10 Roberts, Seth	WR	6-2	195	2	West Alabama	FA-14	FA-Oak-14
86 Smith, Lee	TE	6-6	265	6	Marshall	FA-Buf-15	D5-NE-11
88 Walford, Clive	TE	6-4	250	2	Miami	D3-15	D3-Oak-15
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
74 Alexander, Vadal	G	6-5	326	1	LSU	D7-16	D7-Oak-16
76 Feliciano, Jon	G/C	6-4	325	2	Miami	D4-15	D4-Oak-15
77 Howard, Austin	T	6-7	330	7	Northern Iowa	FA-NYJ-14	FA-Phi-10
61 Hudson, Rodney	C	6-2	300	6	Florida State	FA-KC-15	D2-KC-11
66 Jackson, Gabe	G	6-3	335	3	Mississippi State	D3-14	D3-Oak-14
79 Kirkland, Denver	T/G	6-4	335	1	Arkansas	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
73 Newhouse, Marshall	T	6-4	328	7	TCU	FA-NYG-17	D5-GB-10
67 Omoile, Oni	G	6-2	310	1	Iowa State	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
70 Osemele, Kelechi	G/T	6-5	330	5	Iowa State	FA-Bal-16	D2b-Bal-12
72 Penn, Donald	T	6-4	315	11	Utah State	FA-14	FA-Min-06
68 Silberman, Ian	G	6-5	305	2	Boston College	FA-16	D6-SF-15
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
96 Autry, Denico	DL	6-5	270	3	Mississippi State	FA-14	FA-Oak-14
93 Bean, Jimmy	DE	6-5	250	1	Oklahoma State	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
97 Edwards Jr., Mario	DE	6-3	280	2	Florida State	D2-15	D2-Oak-15
78 Ellis, Justin	DT	6-2	335	3	Louisiana Tech	D4a-14	D4a-Oak-14
98 Jackson, Branden	DL	6-4	268	1	Texas Tech	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
75 Latham, Darius	DT	6-4	306	1	Indiana	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
52 Mack, Khalil	DE	6-3	250	3	Buffalo	D1-14	D1-Oak-14
95 Ward, Jihad	DL	6-5	297	1	Illinois	D2-16	D2-Oak-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
58 Adams, Tyrell	LB	6-2	230	1	West Georgia	FA-16	FA-Sea-15
Ball, Neiron	LB	6-3	235	2	Florida	D5b-15	D5b-Oak-15
91 Calhoun, Shilique	LB	6-4	251	1	Michigan State	D3-16	D3-Oak-16
47 Cowser, James	LB	6-3	245	1	Southern Utah	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
50 Heeney, Ben	LB	6-0	230	2	Kansas	D5a-15	D5a-Oak-15
51 Irvin, Bruce	LB	6-3	250	5	West Virginia	FA-Sea-16	D1-Sea-12
57 James, Cory	LB	6-1	229	1	Colorado State	D6-16	D6-Oak-16
53 Jenkins, Jelani	LB	6-0	240	4	Florida	FA-Mia-17	D4a-Mia-13
45 Mulumba, Andy	LB	6-3	260	3	Eastern Michigan	FA-17	FA-GB-13
46 Norman, Dwayne	LB	6-0	230	1	Duke	FA-17	FA-Den-16
99 Smith, Aldon	LB	6-4	265	6	Missouri	FA-15	D1-SF-11
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
29 Amerson, David	CB	6-1	205	4	NC State	W-Was-15	D2-Was-13
38 Carrie, TJ	CB	6-0	205	3	Ohio	D7a-14	D7a-Oak-14
40 Durden, Kenneth	CB	6-1	182	1	Youngstown State	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
32 Hamilton, Antonio	CB	6-0	188	1	South Carolina St.	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
42 Joseph, Karl	S	5-10	207	1	West Virginia	D1-16	D1-Oak-16
23 McDonald, Dexter	CB	6-1	200	2	Kansas	D7c-15	D7c-Oak-15
39 McGill II, Keith	DB	6-3	210	3	Utah	D4b-14	D4b-Oak-14
27 Nelson, Reggie	S	5-11	210	10	Florida	FA-Cin-16	D1-Jac-07
21 Smith, Sean	CB	6-3	220	8	Utah	FA-KC-16	D2-Mia-09
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
59 Condo, Jon	LS	6-3	240	10	Maryland	FA-06	FA-Dal-05
11 Janikowski, Sebastian	K	6-1	265	17	Florida State	D1-00	D1-Oak-00
7 King, Marquette	P	6-0	195	5	Fort Valley State	FA-12	FA-Oak-12
2 Tavecchio, Giorgio	K	5-10	182	1	California	FA-17	FA-SF-12

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	89	Amari Cooper	84	Cordarrelle Patterson
WR	15	Michael Crabtree	10	Seth Roberts
LT	72	Donald Penn	79	Denver Kirkland
LG	70	Kelechi Osemele	67	Oni Omoile
C	61	Rodney Hudson	76	Jon Feliciano
RG	66	Gabe Jackson	74	Vadal Alexander
RT	77	Austin Howard	73	Marshall Newhouse
TE	86	Lee Smith	87	Jared Cook
QB	4	Derek Carr	8	Connor Cook
FB	49	Jamize Olawale		
RB	24	Marshawn Lynch	33	DeAndré Washington

DEFENSE

DE	97	Mario Edwards	96	Denico Autry
DT	75	Darius Latham		Eddie Vanderdoes (R)
DT	78	Justin Ellis		Treyvon Hester (R)
DE	52	Khalil Mack	95	Jihad Ward
SLB	51	Bruce Irvin	91	Shilique Calhoun
MLB		Marquel Lee (R)	57	Cory James
WLB	53	Jelani Jenkins	58	Tyrell Adams
CB	29	David Amerson		Gareon Conley (R)
CB	21	Sean Smith	38	TJ Carrie
SS	42	Karl Joseph	39	Keith McGill
FS	27	Reggie Nelson		Obi Melifonwu (R)

SPECIALISTS

K	11	Sebastian Janikowski	KR	84	Cordarrelle Patterson
P	7	Marquette King	PR	30	Jalen Richard

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
TE	Jared Cook	Green Bay
OLB	Jelani Jenkins	Miami
RB	Marshawn Lynch	Seattle
OT	Marshall Newhouse	N.Y. Giants
WR/KR	Cordarrelle Patterson	Minnesota

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
S	Nate Allen	Miami
WR	Andre Holmes	Buffalo
DT	Stacy McGee	Washington
RB	Latavius Murray	Minnesota
TE	Mychal Rivera	Jacksonville
LB	Malcolm Smith	San Francisco
OT	Menelik Watson	Denver

SCOUTING THE RAIDERS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP OAKLAND "No one can anticipate the ramifications of the announced move to Las Vegas, but the Raiders are in the unique position of having a really good team with stable leadership from the general manager, head coach and quarterback. ... Derek Carr emerged last year as a potential top-five quarterback because of his natural passing ability and off-the-charts intangibles. ... His connection with Amari Cooper and Michael Crabtree will only improve, and look for new tight end Jared Cook to make an impact as a pass catcher. ... Everyone in the organization is excited about the arrival of Marshawn Lynch, but what does he have left?. ... While Carr should be fully recovered from the fractured leg he suffered at the end of the season, the real key to this offense has been the offensive line. The guard-center-guard trio of Kelechi Osemele, Rodney Hudson and Gabe Jackson is as good as any in the entire league. ... Other than Khalil Mack, the defense needed an infusion of playmakers at all levels, so the Raiders took a chance on Ohio State cornerback Gareon Conley, who was plagued by a rape allegation just days ahead of the draft. ... Free-agent corner Sean Smith was a disappointment in 2016, while safety Reggie Nelson continued his renaissance as an older player. ... The staff is expecting big things from safety Karl Joseph, who should be healthy and has a year in the system. ... The young stars get all the attention, but going from minus-15 to plus-1 to plus-16 in the turnover margin over the last couple years is the secret to their rise in the AFC. That's all about coaching and putting an emphasis on protecting the football. The emotional toll of playing in front of a heartbroken fan base is difficult to forecast, but on paper, this team is primed to make a Super Bowl run."

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

RAIDERS IN THE *DRAFT* B-

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	**Gareon Conley**	**CB**	**6-0**	**195**	**Ohio State**
2.	Obi Melifonwu	S	6-4	224	Connecticut
3.	Eddie Vanderdoes	DT	6-3	305	UCLA
4.	David Sharpe	OT	6-6	343	Florida
5.	Marquel Lee	LB	6-3	240	Wake Forest
7.	Shalom Luani	S	5-11	202	Washington State
7.	Jylan Ware	OT	6-8	295	Alabama State
7.	Elijah Hood	RB	5-11	232	North Carolina
7.	Treyvon Hester	DT	6-2	300	Toledo

Raiders general manager Reggie McKenzie used his first three and five of his first six draft picks on defense, where Oakland has its greatest needs. Gareon Conley fell until late in the first round in large part because of a rape allegation, which he strongly denied. McKenzie said the Raiders did their "due diligence" and felt confident in using a first-round pick on Conley, who could push for playing time this year. The 6'4", 224-pound Obi Melifonwu, another incredible athlete, could help the Raiders solve their problems covering tight ends. The Raiders have a big need at middle linebacker, and McKenzie finally got one in the fifth round when he chose Wake Forest's Marquel Lee. He has the size the Raiders like at the position and could challenge for a starting job as a rookie. Eddie Vanderdoes was plagued by injury and weight problems at UCLA, but he's healthy and in shape now and could help fill a big need in the middle of the Raiders' defense.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

CASHING IN It took coach Jack Del Rio just two seasons to lead the Raiders back to the playoffs for the first time since 2002, and owner Mark Davis rewarded Del Rio with a new four-year contract. "Very appreciative of Mark Davis tearing up my contract and giving me a new four-year deal," Del Rio said at the NFL Scouting Combine. "That was more of MD following through and being a man of his word." Del Rio said his initial four-year deal "wasn't a very good contract" for someone with nine years of experience as an NFL head coach. "But it was an opportunity, and I bet on our ability to get this thing turned around and I feel like we have," Del Rio said. "He was a man of his word, and he stepped up and tore up that deal and gave me a new one."

McKENZIE HONORED General manager Reggie McKenzie's work building the Raiders into a playoff team didn't go unnoticed. He was named the NFL's Executive of the Year by the Pro Football Writers of America. "The acknowledgment, to me, is for the organization, from the top down," McKenzie says. "From the patience and the vision together with me and [Mark Davis], on through the work, the daily work of the coaches and players and to play on Sunday. That's what the acknowledgement is really all about. You see the entire organization working together to win. That's what I see."

MACK ATTACK Raiders defensive end Khalil Mack didn't attend the awards ceremony when he was named 2016 NFL Defensive Player of the Year by the Associated Press, but he acknowledged the honor with a heartfelt message on Instagram. "I want to first thank my fellow NFL peers for this amazing honor," Mack wrote. "It's a privilege to play against you week in and week out. To my teammates, you know I couldn't have done this without you. Thank you to Mr. [Mark] Davis and Mr. [Reggie] McKenzie and the entire Oakland Raiders organization for giving me the opportunity to play the game I love. I want to say thank you to Raider Nation, the best fans in the world. And of course I want to thank my Mom and Dad, my family and friends for always believing in me and allowing me to pursue my dreams. It's truly a blessing to be named NFL Defensive Player of the Year."

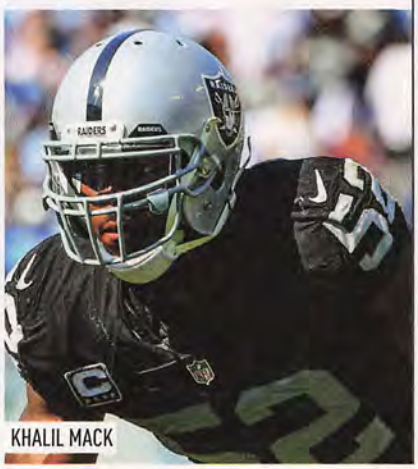
ROOKIE RESPONDS Rookie offensive tackle David Sharpe, a fourth-round pick out of Florida, took issue with some pre-draft reports about the vision — or lack thereof — in his right eye. He flatly denied that he was legally blind in his right eye. "That info is definitely false," Sharpe said. "All of it is false. Just had a little cataract removed when I was younger. Just been battling that since I've been young, but it doesn't affect my play or vision or anything. I'm not blind." Contrary to some reports, Sharpe said, he is not limited to playing on the left side. He said the vision in his right eye is "a little blurrier, but not much" more than that in his left.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

3.4 The Raiders ranked first in the NFL in Adjusted Sack Rate, allowing only 3.4 percent of their pass snaps to become sacks.

12 Seth Roberts and Michael Crabtree tied for the league lead in dropped passes with 12 each.

75 Oakland ran the ball up the middle on a league-high 75 percent of their carries.



KHALIL MACK

2017 NFL SCHEDULES

WEEK 1

Thursday, Sept. 7
Kansas City at New England

Sunday, Sept. 10
N.Y. Jets at Buffalo
Jacksonville at Houston
Baltimore at Cincinnati
Oakland at Tennessee
Philadelphia at Washington
Tampa Bay at Miami
Atlanta at Chicago
Pittsburgh at Cleveland
Arizona at Detroit
Indianapolis at L.A. Rams
Seattle at Green Bay
Carolina at San Francisco
N.Y. Giants at Dallas

Monday, Sept. 11
New Orleans at Minnesota
L.A. Chargers at Denver

WEEK 2

Thursday, Sept. 14
Houston at Cincinnati

Sunday, Sept. 17
Cleveland at Baltimore
Arizona at Indianapolis
Minnesota at Pittsburgh
Chicago at Tampa Bay
New England at New Orleans
Philadelphia at Kansas City
Tennessee at Jacksonville
Buffalo at Carolina
N.Y. Jets at Oakland
Miami at L.A. Chargers
Washington at L.A. Rams
Dallas at Denver
San Francisco at Seattle
Green Bay at Atlanta

Monday, Sept. 18
Detroit at N.Y. Giants

WEEK 3

Thursday, Sept. 21
L.A. Rams at San Francisco

Sunday, Sept. 24
Baltimore vs. Jacksonville (Lon.)
Atlanta at Detroit
Houston at New England
Miami at N.Y. Jets
Pittsburgh at Chicago
Denver at Buffalo
New Orleans at Carolina
Tampa Bay at Minnesota
Cleveland at Indianapolis
N.Y. Giants at Philadelphia
Seattle at Tennessee
Cincinnati at Green Bay
Kansas City at L.A. Chargers
Oakland at Washington

Monday, Sept. 25
Dallas at Arizona

WEEK 4

Thursday, Sept. 28
Chicago at Green Bay

Sunday, Oct. 1
New Orleans vs. Miami (Lon.)
Carolina at New England
Jacksonville at N.Y. Jets
Buffalo at Atlanta
Pittsburgh at Baltimore
Cincinnati at Cleveland
Detroit at Minnesota
L.A. Rams at Dallas
Tennessee at Houston
San Francisco at Arizona
N.Y. Giants at Tampa Bay
Philadelphia at L.A. Chargers
Oakland at Denver
Indianapolis at Seattle

Monday, Oct. 2
Washington at Kansas City

WEEK 5

Thursday, Oct. 5
New England at Tampa Bay

Sunday, Oct. 8
San Francisco at Indianapolis
N.Y. Jets at Cleveland
Carolina at Detroit
Buffalo at Cincinnati
L.A. Chargers at N.Y. Giants
Arizona at Philadelphia
Jacksonville at Pittsburgh
Tennessee at Miami
Seattle at L.A. Rams
Baltimore at Oakland
Green Bay at Dallas
Kansas City at Houston

Monday, Oct. 9
Minnesota at Chicago

Bye: Atlanta, Denver, New Orleans, Washington

WEEK 6

Thursday, Oct. 12
Philadelphia at Carolina

Sunday, Oct. 15
Cleveland at Houston
Detroit at New Orleans
Green Bay at Minnesota
Chicago at Baltimore
New England at N.Y. Jets
Miami at Atlanta
San Francisco at Washington
Tampa Bay at Arizona
L.A. Rams at Jacksonville
Pittsburgh at Kansas City
L.A. Chargers at Oakland
N.Y. Giants at Denver

Monday, Oct. 16
Indianapolis at Tennessee

Bye: Buffalo, Cincinnati, Dallas, Seattle

Falcons, Newton, Carr, Marriotta: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Miller, Winston, Tim Umphrey: Elliott: Layne Murdoch

WEEK 7

Thursday, Oct. 19
Kansas City at Oakland

Sunday, Oct. 22
Carolina at Chicago
Tennessee at Cleveland
New Orleans at Green Bay
N.Y. Jets at Miami
Arizona vs. L.A. Rams (Lon.)
Tampa Bay at Buffalo
Baltimore at Minnesota
Jacksonville at Indianapolis
Cincinnati at Pittsburgh
Dallas at San Francisco
Denver at L.A. Chargers
Seattle at N.Y. Giants
Atlanta at New England

Monday, Oct. 23
Washington at Philadelphia

Bye: Detroit, Houston

WEEK 8

Thursday, Oct. 26
Miami at Baltimore

Sunday, Oct. 29
Minnesota vs. Cleveland (Lon.)
Oakland at Buffalo
Atlanta at N.Y. Jets
San Francisco at Philadelphia
Indianapolis at Cincinnati
Carolina at Tampa Bay
L.A. Chargers at New England
Chicago at New Orleans
Houston at Seattle
Dallas at Washington
Pittsburgh at Detroit

Monday, Oct. 30
Denver at Kansas City

Bye: Arizona, Green Bay, Jacksonville, N.Y. Giants, L.A. Rams, Tennessee

WEEK 9

Thursday, Nov. 2
Buffalo at N.Y. Jets

Sunday, Nov. 5
Baltimore at Tennessee
Cincinnati at Jacksonville
Indianapolis at Houston
Tampa Bay at New Orleans
L.A. Rams at N.Y. Giants
Atlanta at Carolina
Denver at Philadelphia
Washington at Seattle
Arizona at San Francisco
Kansas City at Dallas
Oakland at Miami

Monday, Nov. 6
Detroit at Green Bay

Bye: Chicago, Minnesota, Pittsburgh, L.A. Chargers, Cleveland, New England

WEEK 10

Thursday, Nov. 9
Seattle at Arizona

Sunday, Nov. 12
New Orleans at Buffalo
N.Y. Jets at Tampa Bay
Pittsburgh at Indianapolis
Cincinnati at Tennessee
Minnesota at Washington
L.A. Chargers at Jacksonville
Green Bay at Chicago
Cleveland at Detroit
Houston at L.A. Rams
Dallas at Atlanta
N.Y. Giants at San Francisco
New England at Denver

Monday, Nov. 13
Miami at Carolina

Bye: Baltimore, Kansas City, Oakland, Philadelphia

WEEK 11

Thursday, Nov. 16
Tennessee at Pittsburgh

Sunday, Nov. 19
Arizona at Houston
Detroit at Chicago
Jacksonville at Cleveland
Baltimore at Green Bay
Washington at New Orleans
Kansas City at N.Y. Giants
L.A. Rams at Minnesota
Buffalo at L.A. Chargers
Cincinnati at Denver
New England vs. Oakland (Mexico City)
Philadelphia at Dallas

Monday, Nov. 20
Atlanta at Seattle

Bye: Carolina, Indianapolis, Miami, N.Y. Jets, San Francisco, Tampa Bay

WEEK 12

Thursday, Nov. 23
Minnesota at Detroit
L.A. Chargers at Dallas
N.Y. Giants at Washington

Sunday, Nov. 26
Tennessee at Indianapolis
Carolina at N.Y. Jets
Cleveland at Cincinnati
Buffalo at Kansas City
Tampa Bay at Atlanta
Chicago at Philadelphia
Miami at New England
New Orleans at L.A. Rams
Seattle at San Francisco
Denver at Oakland
Jacksonville at Arizona
Green Bay at Pittsburgh

Monday, Nov. 27
Houston at Baltimore

WEEK 13

Thursday, Nov. 30
Washington at Dallas

Sunday, Dec. 3
Minnesota at Atlanta
San Francisco at Chicago
Tampa Bay at Green Bay
Indianapolis at Jacksonville
Denver at Miami
Carolina at New Orleans
Kansas City at N.Y. Jets
Detroit at Baltimore
New England at Buffalo
Houston at Tennessee
Cleveland at L.A. Chargers
N.Y. Giants at Oakland
L.A. Rams at Arizona
Philadelphia at Seattle

Monday, Dec. 4
Pittsburgh at Cincinnati

WEEK 14

Thursday, Dec. 7
New Orleans at Atlanta

Sunday, Dec. 10
Indianapolis at Buffalo
Minnesota at Carolina
Green Bay at Cleveland
Oakland at Kansas City
San Francisco at Houston
Chicago at Cincinnati
Detroit at Tampa Bay
Seattle at Jacksonville
Washington at L.A. Chargers
Tennessee at Arizona
N.Y. Jets at Denver
Philadelphia at L.A. Rams
Dallas at N.Y. Giants
Baltimore at Pittsburgh

Monday, Dec. 11
New England at Miami

WEEK 15

Thursday, Dec. 14
Denver at Indianapolis

Saturday, Dec. 16
Chicago at Detroit
L.A. Chargers at Kansas City

Sunday, Dec. 17
N.Y. Jets at New Orleans
Philadelphia at N.Y. Giants
Houston at Jacksonville
Baltimore at Cleveland
Miami at Buffalo
Green Bay at Carolina
Cincinnati at Minnesota
Arizona at Washington
L.A. Rams at Seattle
Tennessee at San Francisco
New England at Pittsburgh
Dallas at Oakland

Monday, Dec. 18
Atlanta at Tampa Bay

WEEK 16

Saturday, Dec. 23
Indianapolis at Baltimore
Minnesota at Green Bay

Sunday, Dec. 24
Cleveland at Chicago
Tampa Bay at Carolina
Detroit at Cincinnati
L.A. Rams at Tennessee
Denver at Washington
L.A. Chargers at N.Y. Jets
Miami at Kansas City
Buffalo at New England
Atlanta at New Orleans
Jacksonville at San Francisco
Seattle at Dallas
N.Y. Giants at Arizona

Monday, Dec. 25
Pittsburgh at Houston
Oakland at Philadelphia

WEEK 17

Sunday, Dec. 31
Cincinnati at Baltimore
Chicago at Minnesota
Houston at Indianapolis
Dallas at Philadelphia
Carolina at Atlanta
Green Bay at Detroit
Buffalo at Miami
N.Y. Jets at New England
Washington at N.Y. Giants
New Orleans at Tampa Bay
Jacksonville at Tennessee
Cleveland at Pittsburgh
Oakland at L.A. Chargers
Kansas City at Denver
Arizona at Seattle
San Francisco at L.A. Rams

POSTSEASON

Saturday, Jan. 6
Sunday, Jan. 7
AFC and NFC
Wild Card Playoffs

Saturday, Jan. 13
Sunday, Jan. 14
AFC and NFC
Divisional Playoffs

Sunday, Jan. 21
AFC and NFC
Championship Games

Sunday, Feb. 4
Super Bowl LII
Minneapolis, MN (NBC)

2017 NFC PREDICTIONS

NFC PLAYOFF SEEDING

1. Green Bay
2. Atlanta
3. Dallas
4. Seattle
5. N.Y. Giants
6. Arizona

WILD CARD

Dallas over Arizona
N.Y. Giants over Seattle

DIVISIONAL ROUND

Green Bay over N.Y. Giants
Atlanta over Dallas

NFC CHAMPIONSHIP

Green Bay over Atlanta

SUPER BOWL LII

New England over Green Bay

ATHLON SPORTS
AMERICA'S PREMIER SPORTS PUBLISHER

NFC POWER RANKINGS

1. Green Bay
2. Atlanta
3. Dallas
4. N.Y. Giants
5. Seattle
6. Arizona
7. Carolina
8. Tampa Bay
9. Detroit
10. Minnesota
11. New Orleans
12. Washington
13. Philadelphia
14. Chicago
15. L.A. Rams
16. San Francisco

NFC EAST

1. Dallas Cowboys
Can Dak Prescott and Ezekiel Elliott repeat their rookie success?

2. New York Giants
Offensive line questions linger, but otherwise they look like contenders.

3. Washington Redskins
Typical Redskins dysfunction showed up again in the offseason.

4. Philadelphia Eagles
Carson Wentz has some new targets, but there are still too many holes.

NFC SOUTH

1. Atlanta Falcons
Biggest hurdle may be bouncing back from historic Super Bowl collapse.

2. Carolina Panthers
Panthers still will go as far as Cam Newton can take them.

3. Tampa Bay Buccaneers
Bucs got Jameis Winston some more weapons. Can the defense hold up?

4. New Orleans Saints
Someone has to finish last in a division without a truly bad team.

NFC NORTH

1. Green Bay Packers
Aaron Rodgers' strong finish in 2016 showed he has plenty left.

2. Detroit Lions
Can the Lions make back-to-back playoff trips for the first time in two decades?

3. Minnesota Vikings
Much-needed changes to the offensive line could key return to postseason.

4. Chicago Bears
Signed Mike Glennon and drafted Mitch Trubisky. As if they had no other issues.

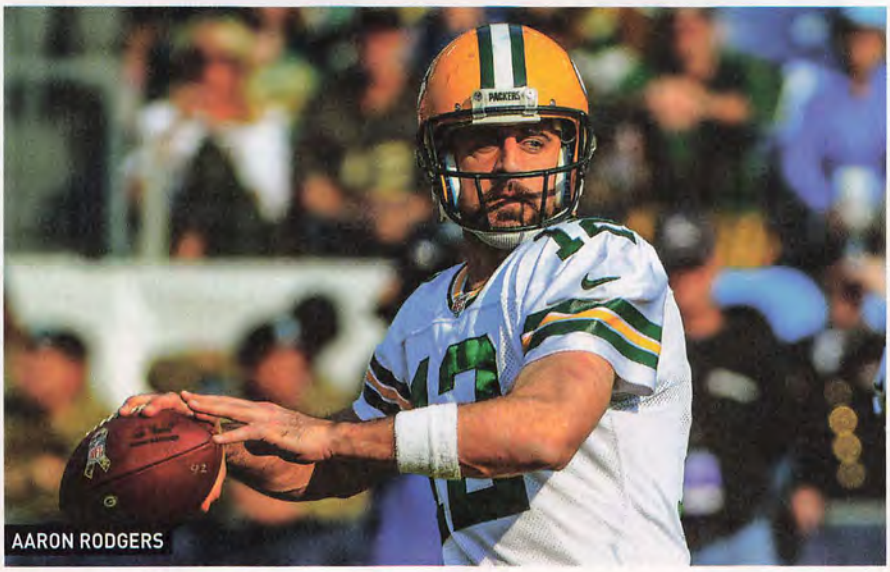
NFC WEST

1. Seattle Seahawks
Still the class of the division, but they didn't exactly attack their OL issues.

2. Arizona Cardinals
The Cards' window for a Super Bowl run may close if it doesn't happen in 2017.

3. Los Angeles Rams
Jared Goff must show some signs of improvement in his sophomore season.

4. San Francisco 49ers
Long-term rebuilding has begun, but GM John Lynch has his work cut out.


AARON RODGERS

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

NFC COORDINATOR CAROUSEL

ATLANTA FALCONS
Offensive Coordinator
Old: Kyle Shanahan **New:** Steve Sarkisian
Sark arrives with some baggage — an ugly departure from USC and a strange one-game stint as Alabama's offensive coordinator — but he slides into one of the best situations in the league. Atlanta just had a dominant offensive season and returns all its key pieces, but Falcons fans are welcoming the fresh start after Shanahan's questionable play calling during the Super Bowl collapse.

ATLANTA FALCONS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Richard Smith
New: Marquand Manuel
At 37, Manuel is unseasoned after only four years as an NFL assistant. But his relatively meteoric rise has been hastened by some obvious skills as a leader and teacher. He's made enough of an impression on Dan Quinn during their time together in Seattle and Atlanta for Quinn to hand him the reins of the defense coming off a Super Bowl appearance.

CAROLINA PANTHERS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Sean McDermott **New:** Steve Wilks
The defensive backs coach in Carolina since 2012, Wilks has paid his dues in a 22-year coaching career that has included stints with eight colleges and three NFL franchises. His association with Ron Rivera goes back to 2007, when the two worked together in Chicago, and Rivera has brought Wilks along to each subsequent stop.

LOS ANGELES RAMS
Offensive Coordinator
Old: Rob Boras **New:** Matt LaFleur
Another first-time coordinator, the former Falcons quarterbacks coach parlayed the best season of Matt Ryan's career into a job with a new regime in Los Angeles. LaFleur faces an entirely different challenge in L.A., where No. 1 overall draft pick Jared Goff struggled during an 0-7 audition. There's nowhere to go but up, but the youthful enthusiasm of the 36-year-old LaFleur (and his 31-year-old boss, Sean McVay) will be tested. The top priority will be to unleash running back Todd Gurley after a sophomore slump.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS
Offensive Coordinator
Old: Curtis Modkins **New:** Kyle Shanahan
Shanahan, the new boss in San Francisco, will call his own plays. Of more concern than the play calling, however, is the complete makeover at the quarterback position. Likely starter Brian Hoyer will enjoy playing for Shanahan, who has tutored quarterbacks of varying skill sets — from Robert Griffin III to Matt Ryan — to high levels of success. Shanahan will get plenty of time to prove himself.

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Jim O'Neil **New:** Robert Saleh
Saleh's new boss, Kyle Shanahan, says that Saleh is "as smart as anyone I've been around." Saleh will need every bit of that acumen to rebuild a San Francisco defense that was last in the NFL in scoring, rushing and total defense. Saleh will try to implement his version of the Seahawks' scheme — the difference being, he lacks the Seahawks' personnel. Saleh, 38, is in his first NFL coordinator job, and if can succeed in San Fran, he'll write his own ticket.

WASHINGTON REDSKINS
Offensive Coordinator
Old: Sean McVay **New:** Matt Cavanaugh
Kirk Cousins' position coach is now his coordinator, as Cavanaugh takes the reins of an offense that Cousins has run well under Cavanaugh's tutelage for two record-breaking seasons. Last season, Cousins threw for a franchise-record 4,917 yards with 25 touchdowns. This is the 60-year-old Cavanaugh's fourth coordinator job after stints in Chicago (1997-98), Baltimore (1999-2004) and Pittsburgh (2005-08).

WASHINGTON REDSKINS
Defensive Coordinator
Old: Joe Barry **New:** Greg Manusky
While Manusky, who coached outside linebackers for Washington last season, may be a rather uninspiring hire, he does have plenty of experience. Head coach Jay Gruden was looking for fresh perspective and renewed energy on a lackluster defense, and he thinks he found it in Manusky, who also impressed the detail-oriented Gruden with his organizational skills.

OFFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR
Aaron Rodgers, QB, Green Bay

DEFENSIVE PLAYER OF THE YEAR
Vic Beasley, DE, Atlanta

COMEBACK PLAYER OF THE YEAR
NaVorro Bowman, LB, San Francisco

OFFENSIVE ROOKIE OF THE YEAR
Christian McCaffrey, RB, Carolina

DEFENSIVE ROOKIE OF THE YEAR
Solomon Thomas, DE, San Francisco

COACH OF THE YEAR
Ron Rivera, Carolina

VIC BEASLEY

DALLAS COWBOYS

NFC EAST FORECAST

1

The Cowboys seemingly took an offseason step back after last season's surprising success. Executive vice president Stephen Jones conceded as much after the Cowboys lost 11 players in free agency and two to retirement. Those 11 players started 546 career games for the Cowboys, including 94 last season.

Yet, owner Jerry Jones, ever the optimist, expects the Cowboys to be better.

"We lost significant numbers of players, but we were selective on what we lost," Jones says. "So it's important that these [rookies] play … and they need to play. The ones that we drafted last year really need to play. I wouldn't dare project the record of what we can do, but I think we've got a team that right now is better — because of the prospects — than the one we ended out the year with. I think it's really got the chance to be better the right way, which is to be younger."

After finishing 13–3 last season, the Cowboys might find that record difficult to top this season. But the goal is the same as it's been every year since 1995 when they won their last Super Bowl — to get back to the Promised Land.

OFFENSE The plan for Dak Prescott last season was for him to sit, watch and learn behind Tony Romo. But the Cowboys' best-laid plans blew up in training camp when backup quarterback Kellen Moore broke his right leg and, three weeks later, Romo fractured his back. Prescott, a fourth-round selection, had arguably the best rookie season by a quarterback in NFL history and won Offensive Rookie of the Year over teammate Ezekiel Elliott. Prescott pushed Romo into retirement, with the Cowboys handing the keys to the youngster. Moore, who missed all of last season, re-signed. The 27-year-old veteran is a favorite of offensive coordinator Scott Linehan.

Elliott led the league in rushing as a rookie, gaining 1,631 yards and earning six MVP votes. Elliott could contribute more in the passing game after the free-agent departure of third-down back Lance Dunbar. The Cowboys aren't worried about Elliott's workload after giving him 354 touches last season. Elliott had 322 carries and 32 receptions in 716 offensive snaps in the regular season. He played another 56 snaps with 23 touches in the postseason. (DeMarco Murray had 449 touches on 782 snaps in 2014 for the Cowboys when he led the league in rushing.) Elliott gained 833 yards and scored seven touchdowns on 166 first-half carries — a 5.02 average per carry — and 922 yards and eight touchdowns on 178 carries in the second half and overtime, a 5.18 average per carry.

The Cowboys re-signed Darren McFadden as Elliott's primary backup. McFadden, a 1,000-yard rusher in 2015, missed most of last season with a fractured right elbow. Former linebacker Keith Smith played fullback on 12.6 percent of the offensive snaps last season, mostly in short-yardage and goal-line situations.

Receivers Cole Beasley, Dez Bryant and Terrance Williams combined for 169 receptions, 2,223 yards and 17 touchdowns last season. They rank among the best units in the league. While Bryant remains their big-play receiver, Prescott found a security blanket in Beasley, who led the team in receptions (75) and receiving yards (833) for the first time. The Cowboys re-signed Brice Butler as their fourth receiver and added North Carolina's Ryan Switzer in the draft. Switzer is a Beasley lookalike and will likely replace Lucky Whitehead.

Jason Witten, 36, signed a new deal in the offseason that virtually assures he will finish his career with the Cowboys. Although he played all 16 games for a 13th consecutive season, Witten isn't the same Pro Bowl tight end he once was. Geoff Swaim became an important part of the offense last season with his blocking and a handful of clutch catches. The Cowboys missed Swaim when a torn pectoral muscle ended his season after 10 games. James Hanna, another solid blocker, returns after missing all of 2016.

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/PRESIDENT/GENERAL MANAGER: Jerry Jones
COO/EXECUTIVE VP/DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Stephen Jones
SENIOR DIR. OF FOOTBALL ADMIN: Todd Williams
DIRECTOR OF PRO SCOUTING: Judd Garrett
STADIUM: AT&T Stadium (100,000)
SURFACE: Matrix Turf
WEBSITE: www.dallascowboys.com
TICKETS: 1-817-892-4400
TRAINING CAMP: River Ridge Playing Fields (Oxnard, Calif.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Jason Garrett
RECORD WITH TEAM: 58–46
CAREER RECORD: 58–46
ASST. HEAD COACH/SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Rich Bisaccia
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Rod Marinelli
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Scott Linehan
QUARTERBACKS: Wade Wilson
RUNNING BACKS: Gary Brown
WIDE RECEIVERS: Derek Dooley
TIGHT ENDS: Mike Pope
OFFENSIVE LINE: Frank Pollack
DEFENSIVE ENDS: Ben Bloom
DEFENSIVE TACKLES: Leon Lett
LINEBACKERS: Matt Eberflus
SECONDARY: Joe Baker

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	N.Y. Giants	8:30	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Sept. 17	at Denver	4:25	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Sept. 25	at Arizona (Mon.)	8:30	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Oct. 1	L.A. Rams	1:00	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Oct. 8	Green Bay	4:25	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
BYE							
Oct. 22	at San Francisco	4:05	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Oct. 29	at Washington	4:25	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Nov. 5	Kansas City	4:25	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Nov. 12	at Atlanta	4:25	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Nov. 19	Philadelphia	8:30	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Nov. 23	L.A. Chargers (Thu.)	4:30	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Nov. 30	Washington (Thu.)	8:25	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Dec. 10	at N.Y. Giants	4:25	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Dec. 17	at Oakland	8:30	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Dec. 24	Seattle	4:25	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Dec. 31	at Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)

Layne Murdoch

QB DAK PRESCOTT

2016 RESULTS (13-3)

Sept. 11	N.Y. Giants	L	19-20
Sept. 18	at Washington	W	27-23
Sept. 25	Chicago	W	31-17
Oct. 2	at San Francisco	W	24-17
Oct. 9	Cincinnati	W	28-14
Oct. 16	at Green Bay	W	30-16
Oct. 30	Philadelphia (ot)	W	29-23
Nov. 6	at Cleveland	W	35-10
Nov. 13	at Pittsburgh	W	35-30
Nov. 20	Baltimore	W	27-17
Nov. 24	Washington	W	31-26
Dec. 1	at Minnesota	W	17-15
Dec. 11	at N.Y. Giants	L	7-10
Dec. 18	Tampa Bay	W	26-20
Dec. 26	Detroit	W	42-21
Jan. 1	at Philadelphia	L	13-27
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 15	Green Bay	L	31-34

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Dak Prescott	459	311	3,667	23	4
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Ezekiel Elliott	322	1,631	5.1	15	
Alfred Morris	69	243	3.5	2	
Dak Prescott	57	282	4.9	6	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Cole Beasley	75	833	11.1	5	
Jason Witten	69	673	9.8	3	
Dez Bryant	50	796	15.9	8	
Terrance Williams	44	594	13.5	4	
Ezekiel Elliott	32	363	11.3	1	
Brice Butler	16	219	13.7	3	

KICKING: Dan Bailey, 27-32 FGs, 46-46 PAT, 127 points
TACKLES: Sean Lee, 145; Byron Jones, 88
SACKS: Benson Mayowa, 6.0; Maliek Collins, 5.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Barry Church, 2; Seven players tied with 1

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	376.7	5	4
Rushing	149.8	2	1
Passing	226.9	23	13
Scoring	26.3	5	4
Third Down %	42.3	10	6
Punt Returns	7.1	23	13
Kick Returns	20.5	T22	12

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	343.9	14	7
Rushing	83.5	1	1
Passing	260.4	26	12
Scoring	19.1	5	3
Interceptions	9	T27	T14
Sacks	36	13	9
Turnover Differential	+5	T9	5

EZEKIEL ELLIOTT

The Cowboys' offensive line has earned the title of the league's best. Left tackle Tyron Smith, right guard Zack Martin and center Travis Frederick earned three of the five All-Pro spots last season. But for the first time in three years, the Cowboys face uncertainty up front. Right tackle Doug Free unexpectedly retired after last season, leaving a hole. The Cowboys have moved La'el Collins, who started the first three games at left guard last season before undergoing toe surgery, to right tackle. Former third-round pick Chaz Green, who has spent most of his first two seasons in the training room with only two career starts, also will get to compete for playing time at tackle. Dallas signed tackle Byron Bell and guard Jonathan Cooper as insurance, and Cooper gets the first crack at left guard.

DEFENSE The Cowboys had 36 sacks, five more than the previous season, but it marked the fifth consecutive season that they finished outside of the league's top 10. They have not had a player with double-digit sacks since defensive tackle Jason Hatcher had 11 in 2013. The Cowboys made no secret of seeking a "war daddy" pass rusher, something they haven't had since DeMarcus Ware. They drafted Taco Charlton in the first round, but he isn't that. He'll instead join the rotation. DeMarcus Lawrence, who showed promise in 2015 with a team-leading eight sacks, took a step back with one sack in 12 games last season. He had yet another back surgery in the offseason. David Irving has shown flashes, and the Cowboys expect more from Tyrone Crawford, whether he stays at end or returns to tackle. Defensive end Charles Tapper, a third-round pick in 2016, spent his rookie season on injured reserve. Maliek Collins, who had a solid rookie season, and Cedric Thornton, who took awhile to adapt to Rod Marinelli's scheme, will play big roles inside.

Sean Lee didn't make the Pro Bowl, but he was rewarded with All-Pro honors for the first time. Lee, the defense's only star, made 145 tackles and 12 tackles for a loss. Versatile Anthony Hitchens started every game at middle linebacker last season and made 78 tackles. The Cowboys could move him to the strong side, where Damien Wilson started six times and Kyle Wilber once in the seven times in 2016 that the team didn't open in the nickel. That's because the Cowboys expect Jaylon Smith, a second-round pick last year, to play in 2017 after a major knee injury in his final game at Notre Dame.

The Cowboys revamped their secondary after losing cornerbacks Brandon Carr and Morris Claiborne and safeties Barry Church and J.J. Wilcox in free agency. None of the four was special, though as a group they contributed 39 starts, 254 tackles, five interceptions and 28 defensed passes last season. The Cowboys signed Nolan Carroll in free agency to pair with returnees Orlando Scandrick and Anthony Brown. After drafting three corners, including Chidobe Awuzie in the second round and Jourdan Lewis in the third, the Cowboys could move on from Scandrick. Free safety Byron Jones is the only guaranteed starter in the secondary, although Jeff Heath, a core special teams player, will get the first shot at strong safety.

SPECIALISTS Dan Bailey ranks as the second-most accurate placekicker in NFL history, making 89.5 percent of his field goals. Punter Chris Jones had his best season with a 45.9-yard average, a 40.5 net and only four touchbacks. Unhappy with Whitehead's production as a returner, the Cowboys drafted Switzer. The Cowboys averaged only 7.1 yards per punt return and 20.5 yards per kickoff return last season.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Cowboys surprised everyone last season with a rookie quarterback and a rookie running back leading them to the NFC's best regular-season record. But a divisional-round playoff loss at home left a sour taste. The Cowboys expect more this season despite their losses in free agency and to retirement, but the division has improved since last season. They might not reproduce the regular-season record, but taking the next step in the postseason is the goal.

Layne Murdoch

2017 VETERAN COWBOYS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
17 Moore, Kellen	QB	6-0	200	5	Boise State	FA-15	FA-Det-12
4 Prescott, Dak	QB	6-2	238	1	Mississippi State	D4b-16	D4b-Dal-16
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
21 Elliott, Ezekiel	RB	6-0	225	1	Ohio State	D1-16	D1-Dal-16
20 McFadden, Darren	RB	6-1	220	9	Arkansas	FA-Oak-15	D1-Oak-08
46 Morris, Alfred	RB	5-10	222	5	Florida Atlantic	FA-Was-16	D6-Was-12
41 Smith, Keith	FB	6-0	240	3	San Jose State	FA-15	FA-Dal-14
45 Smith, Rod	FB	6-3	240	2	Ohio State	W-Sea-15	FA-Sea-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
11 Beasley, Cole	WR	5-8	180	5	SMU	FA-12	FA-Dal-12
88 Bryant, Dez	WR	6-2	220	7	Oklahoma State	D1-10	D1-Dal-10
19 Butler, Brice	WR	6-3	215	4	San Diego State	T-Oak-15	D7a-Oak-13
80 Gathers, Rico	TE	6-6	281	1	Baylor	D6d-16	D6d-Dal-16
Hamlett, Connor	TE	6-7	259	1	Oregon State	FA-17	FA-Jac-15
84 Hanna, James	TE	6-4	260	5	Oklahoma	D6-12	D6-Dal-12
81 Jones, Andy	WR	6-1	222	1	Jacksonville	FA-16	FA-Dal-16
McDuffie, Quincy	WR	5-10	179	1	UCF	FA-17	FA-Den-13
Nwachukwu, Uzoma	WR	6-0	194	1	Texas A&M	FA-17	FA-Hou-13
87 Swaim, Geoff	TE	6-4	260	2	Texas	D7c-15	D7c-Dal-15
13 Whitehead, Lucky	WR	5-9	180	2	Florida Atlantic	FA-15	FA-Dal-15
83 Williams, Terrance	WR	6-2	210	4	Baylor	D3a-13	D3a-Dal-13
82 Witten, Jason	TE	6-6	263	14	Tennessee	D3-03	D3-Dal-03
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
75 Bell, Byron	T	6-5	340	6	New Mexico	FA-Ten-17	FA-Car-11
63 Cleary, Emmett	G/T	6-7	324	2	Boston College	FA-16	FA-Ind-13
71 Collins, La'el	G	6-4	315	2	LSU	FA-15	FA-Dal-15
64 Cooper, Jonathan	G	6-2	310	3	North Carolina	FA-17	D1-Ari-13
67 DeBord, Clay	T	6-6	305	1	Eastern Washington	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
78 Edwards, Kadeem	G	6-4	313	1	Tennessee State	FA-16	D5-TB-14
72 Frederick, Travis	C	6-4	318	4	Wisconsin	D1-13	D1-Dal-13
79 Green, Chaz	T	6-5	318	2	Florida	D3-15	D3-Dal-15
73 Looney, Joe	C	6-3	315	4	Lake Worth	FA-Ten-16	D4-SF-12
70 Martin, Zack	G	6-4	315	3	Notre Dame	D1-14	D1-Dal-14
77 Smith, Tyron	T	6-5	320	6	USC	D1-11	D1-Dal-11
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
96 Collins, Maliek	DT	6-2	305	1	Nebraska	D3-16	D3-Dal-16
98 Crawford, Tyrone	DL	6-4	295	5	Boise State	D3-12	D3-Dal-12
94 Gregory, Randy	DE	6-5	255	2	Nebraska	D2-15	D2-Dal-15
95 Irving, David	DL	6-7	285	2	Iowa State	PS-KC-15	FA-KC-15
Jones, Lenny	DE	6-3	270	1	Nevada	FA-17	FA-SF-16
90 Lawrence, DeMarcus	DE	6-3	270	3	Boise State	D2-14	D2-Dal-14
93 Mayowa, Benson	DE	6-3	265	4	Idaho	FA-Oak-16	FA-Sea-13
Moore, Damontre	DE	6-4	260	4	Texas A&M	FA-Sea-17	D3-NYG-13
55 Paea, Stephen	DT	6-1	300	6	Oregon State	FA-Cle-17	D2-Chi-11
99 Tapper, Charles	DE	6-2	270	1	Oklahoma	D4a-16	D4a-Dal-16
92 Thornton, Cedric	DT	6-4	295	5	Southern Arkansas	FA-Phi-16	FA-Phi-11
Wood, Zach	DL	6-3	282	1	SMU	FA-16	FA-Dal-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
48 George, Jeremiah	LB	5-11	234	3	Iowa State	FA-16	D5-NYJ-14
59 Hitchens, Anthony	LB	6-0	235	3	Iowa	D4-14	D4-Dal-14
50 Lee, Sean	LB	6-2	238	7	Penn State	D2-10	D2-Dal-10
Lotulelei, John	LB	5-11	233	2	UNLV	FA-17	FA-Sea-13
53 Nzeocha, Mark	LB	6-3	240	2	Wyoming	D7a-15	D7a-Dal-15
54 Smith, Jaylon	LB	6-2	240	1	Notre Dame	D2-16	D2-Dal-16
51 Wilber, Kyle	LB	6-4	245	5	Wake Forest	D4a-12	D4a-Dal-12
57 Wilson, Damien	LB	6-1	245	2	Minnesota	D4-15	D4-Dal-15
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
Blanton, Robert	S	6-1	200	5	Notre Dame	FA-Buf-17	D5-Min-12
30 Brown, Anthony	CB	5-11	196	1	Purdue	D6a-16	D6a-Dal-16
24 Carroll, Nolan	CB	6-1	205	7	Maryland	FA-Phi-17	D5-Mia-10
35 Frazier, Kavon	S	6-0	215	1	Central Michigan	D6b-16	D6b-Dal-16
38 Heath, Jeff	S	6-1	212	4	Saginaw Valley St.	FA-13	FA-Dal-13
31 Jones, Byron	S	6-0	205	2	Connecticut	D1-15	D1-Dal-15
37 McKinnon, Jeremiah	CB	6-0	194	1	FIU	FA-17	FA-Dal-16
23 McFadden, Leon	CB	5-10	190	3	San Diego State	FA-16	D3-Cle-13
32 Scandrick, Orlando	CB	5-10	196	9	Boise State	D5-08	D5-Dal-08
29 Seamster, Sammy	CB	6-0	205	1	Middle Tennessee	FA-16	FA-Bal-14
28 Showers, Jameill	S	6-1	230	1	UTEP	FA-15	FA-Dal-15
Thomas, Duke	CB	5-11	178	1	Texas	FA-17	FA-Hou-16
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
5 Bailey, Dan	K	6-0	195	6	Oklahoma State	FA-11	FA-Dal-11
6 Jones, Chris	P	6-0	205	5	Carson Newman	FA-11	FA-Dal-11
91 Ladouceur, Louis-Philippe	LS	6-5	256	12	California	FA-05	FA-NO-05

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	88	Dez Bryant	19	Brice Butler
WR	11	Cole Beasley	10	Ryan Switzer (R)
WR	83	Terrance Williams	19	Brice Butler
LT	77	Tyron Smith	75	Byron Bell
LG	64	Jonathan Cooper	63	Emmett Cleary
C	72	Travis Frederick	73	Joe Looney
RG	70	Zack Martin	63	Emmett Cleary
RT	71	La'el Collins	79	Chaz Green
TE	82	Jason Witten	87	Geoff Swaim
QB	4	Dak Prescott	17	Kellen Moore
RB	21	Ezekiel Elliott	20	Darren McFadden

DEFENSE

DE	98	Tyrone Crawford	97	Taco Charlton (R)
DT	96	Maliek Collins	95	David Irving
DT	92	Cedric Thornton	55	Stephen Paea
DE	90	DeMarcus Lawrence	93	Benson Mayowa
WLB	50	Sean Lee	53	Mark Nzeocha
MLB	59	Anthony Hitchens	54	Jaylon Smith
SLB	57	Damien Wilson	59	Anthony Hitchens
CB	30	Anthony Brown	24	Nolan Carroll
CB	32	Orlando Scandrick	33	Chidobe Awuzie (R)
FS	31	Byron Jones	35	Kavon Frazier
SS	38	Jeff Heath		Robert Blanton

SPECIALISTS

K	5	Dan Bailey	KR	10	Ryan Switzer (R)
P	6	Chris Jones	PR	10	Ryan Switzer (R)

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
OT	Byron Bell	Tennessee
S	Robert Blanton	Buffalo
CB	Nolan Carroll	Philadelphia
OG	Jonathan Cooper	Cleveland
DE	Damontre Moore	Seattle
DT	Stephen Paea	Cleveland

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
CB	Brandon Carr	Baltimore
S	Barry Church	Jacksonville
CB	Morris Claiborne	N.Y. Jets
DL	Jack Crawford	Atlanta
TE	Gavin Escobar	Kansas City
RT	Doug Free	Retired
OG	Ron Leary	Denver
DT	Terrell McClain	Washington
QB	Tony Romo	Retired
S	J.J. Wilcox	Tampa Bay

SCOUTING THE COWBOYS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP DALLAS "I don't recall seeing a college quarterback improve his passing more in a short period of time than Dak Prescott. His spirals were cleaner, and when people were open, he put the football on them. ... Heading into 2017 though, his world has changed, because of the impossibly high expectations, no more Tony Romo in the quarterback room and opponent defensive coordinators having an offseason to break down his game. ... What hasn't changed is that the Cowboys still have the best offensive line in the league paired off with arguably the most talented workhorse running back in Ezekiel Elliott. Elliott raced to 1,631 yards and 15 touchdowns to codify the Cowboys' master plan of taking some pressure off the QB and their defense. ... With three former first-round picks up front, Dallas only has to sort out where La'el Collins fits as a left guard or right tackle after Ronald Leary was lost in free agency and Doug Free retired. ... All the focus in the draft went to defense, where they lean on coordinator Rod Marinelli to pull it all together. ... Across the league, defensive end Taco Charlton, cornerback Chidobe Awuzie and cornerback Jourdan Lewis were all seen as second-round picks, with Taco being a reach and Lewis deemed a value. ... Almost their entire secondary walked in free agency, so the two rookies will have to play. ... The Cowboys should be good, but a tougher schedule, sophomore slumps and the weight of expectations will likely keep them from reaching 13 wins again."

COWBOYS IN THE *DRAFT* B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Taco Charlton	DE	6-6	271	Michigan
2.	Chidobe Awuzie	CB	6-0	202	Colorado
3.	Jourdan Lewis	CB	5-10	182	Michigan
4.	Ryan Switzer	WR	5-8	181	North Carolina
5.	Xavier Woods	S	5-11	197	Louisiana Tech
6.	Marquez White	CB	6-0	194	Florida State
7.	Joey Ivie	DT	6-3	298	Florida
7.	Noah Brown	WR	6-2	222	Ohio State
7.	Jordan Carrell	DT	6-2	290	Colorado

The Cowboys entered the draft wanting to address two needs — defensive end and cornerback. They didn't find Jerry Jones' "war daddy" pass rusher in Taco Charlton, a one-year starter who had 9.5 sacks last season, but the Michigan product will join defensive coordinator Rod Marinelli's rotation. The Cowboys lost four key players in the secondary and drafted four. They considered Chidobe Awuzie at No. 28, but his lack of ideal size and length sent them to Charlton. The Cowboys were thrilled when Awuzie fell to them in the second round, and he will compete for a starting job along with Orlando Scandrick and Anthony Brown. Jourdan Lewis and Marquez White also will get chances to compete for playing time at the position, with the Cowboys having lost Brandon Carr and Morris Claiborne in free agency. Xavier Woods will compete for playing time at safety after the Cowboys lost J.J. Wilcox and Barry Church in free agency. Marinelli loved the selection of Joey Ivie, and Terrell McClain's departure in free agency gives him a chance to get on the field. The Cowboys expect Ryan Switzer, who had eight career punt return touchdowns, to supplant Lucky Whitehead as the punt returner.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

BIG NUMBERS Tony Romo retired in possession of most of the Cowboys passing records. He also retired as the highest-paid player in franchise history. Romo made $127.42 million in 14 seasons after accepting a $10,000 signing bonus as an undrafted free agent in 2004. That includes $31.17 million in salary, $38.81 million in signing bonuses and $49 million in restructured bonuses.

WHO'S NEXT? Does DeMarcus Ware or Jerry Jones become the next inductee into the Cowboys' Ring of Honor? Jones makes the decisions on the names ringing AT&T Stadium. But executive vice president Stephen Jones says he will make the decision to honor his father, who earns induction into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in August. Jerry Jones says the team will honor Ware, the franchise's all-time sacks leader, in the Ring of Honor one day. Twenty-one men have earned induction into the Cowboys' Ring of Honor. Safety Darren Woodson was the most recent honoree (2015).

EMPTY ACCOLADES Since 2002, Cowboys draft picks have earned a combined 62 Pro Bowl berths. The Chiefs rank second with 45, the Ravens third with 42 and the Patriots fourth with 41. But the Cowboys have no Super Bowls to show for it, having won their last title in 1995.

LACK OF SACKS The Cowboys have not had a double-digit sack leader since defensive tackle Jason Hatcher had 11 in 2013. Ware was the team's last defensive end to have double-digit sacks, getting 11.5 in 2012. Benson Mayowa led the 2016 Cowboys with six.

I'M A COWBOY Ware retired as a Cowboy, signing a one-day deal on April 24. Ware, who played for the Cowboys from 2005-13, owns the team's all-time sacks record with 117. He spent his final three seasons in Denver, winning a Super Bowl with the Broncos in 2015.

JERRY'S WORLD The Cowboys have not found a home-field advantage at AT&T Stadium, going only 36–31 in the eight seasons playing in Arlington. The Cowboys, though, did go 7–1 there in the 2016 regular season before losing to the Packers at home in the postseason.

JUST WIN The Cowboys have the league's highest all-time regular-season winning percentage at .573 (493–367–6). Green Bay ranks second with a .567 winning percentage (730–553–37).

WILD RIDE After three seasons of consistent mediocrity from 2011-13 — Dallas went 8–8 each season — the Cowboys have been on quite the roller-coaster ride in recent years. In 2014, they went 12–4 and won the NFC East. The following season, they slumped to 4–12 and finished in last place. Then, a year ago, they went 13–3 — the franchise's best record since 2007 — and won the division again.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

5.51 The Cowboys averaged 5.51 points per red-zone appearance, second in the NFL only to the Titans.

47 Dallas ran less than the NFL average (56 percent) up the middle, carrying the ball there only 47 percent of the time.

81 The Dallas defense had just 81 missed tackles on the season, third fewest in the league.

DEZ BRYANT

Charlton: AP; Bryant: Layne Murdoch

NEW YORK GIANTS

NFC EAST FORECAST

2

The Giants are in a full-out sprint to win one last championship in the Eli Manning Era. And the clock is ticking.

That's what the last two offseasons have been all about. They spent $200 million a year ago to completely rebuild their defense, and then this offseason they added a 33-year-old receiver (Brandon Marshall) who is the kind of big target Manning has been sorely missing. The goal is to squeeze one last Super Bowl out of their franchise quarterback before his contract expires after the 2019 season.

They went 11–5 last year in Ben McAdoo's rookie season as head coach and returned to the playoffs for the first time since their last championship season, 2011. That was a good start, but they got bounced out of the playoffs with a lopsided loss to the Packers in Green Bay. This season, they are expecting a better ending.

OFFENSE One of the biggest selling points for hiring McAdoo as Tom Coughlin's replacement was the fact that the Giants' offense finished in the top 10 in both of his seasons as offensive coordinator. Manning was thriving and the Giants didn't want to lose that momentum. So imagine their shock when they finished 25th in the league in total offense in 2016 and averaged less than 20 points per game.

Odell Beckham Jr. has emerged as one of the top playmakers in the game, but the Giants became overly reliant on the All-Pro from LSU, who suffered through a nightmarish performance against Green Bay in his first career playoff game. The Giants need to diversify. Gone is Victor Cruz, who just wasn't his old self after knee and calf surgeries. In is Marshall, the big ex-Jet who at 6'4" is the tallest regular receiver they've had since the days of Plaxico Burress (6'5") and Amani Toomer (6'3"). Manning has been desperate for a big target, especially in the red zone, and Marshall and slot receiver Sterling Shepard should take plenty of defensive attention away from Beckham.

The Giants also added speedy tight end Evan Engram in the first round of the draft. Engram is really more of a receiver, but he will replace the unreliable Will Tye and Larry Donnell as a deep option over the middle and provide another weapon who can free up Beckham. Also, the speedy Paul Perkins is taking over for the aging Rashad Jennings at running back, and the hope is that his emergence will force defenses to concentrate on the run more in 2017.

One problem, though: The offensive line was awful last season, and with the exception of the addition of underachieving fifth-year lineman D.J. Fluker, it basically returns intact. It appears that the embattled Ereck Flowers will remain at left tackle, mostly due to a lack of better options. And there's uncertainty on the right side, where Fluker will likely battle John Jerry for the right guard position, leaving former seventh-round pick Bobby Hart as the starter at right tackle.

Whatever the alignment, if the line doesn't improve, the immobile Manning once again won't have the time to take advantage of his many weapons.

DEFENSE What does $200 million get you? Apparently a top-10 defense, and the good news for the Giants is that 10 of 11 starters are back for another go-round. And the one they lost — defensive tackle Johnathan Hankins — was their fourth-best lineman, and he was replaced in the second round of the draft (Alabama's Dalvin Tomlinson).

The loss of Hankins shouldn't hurt the run defense, which is anchored by Damon Harrison — arguably the best run-stuffing lineman in the league. Tomlinson should provide some strength in the middle, although like Hankins, he may not provide much of a pass rush. That's OK, because the Giants will get Jason Pierre-Paul back after he missed the end of last season and the playoff game with

THE ORGANIZATION

PRESIDENT/CEO: John K. Mara
CHAIRMAN/EXECUTIVE VP: Steve Tisch
SENIOR VP/GENERAL MANAGER: Jerry Reese
SENIOR VP OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Chris Mara
STADIUM: MetLife Stadium (82,500)
SURFACE: UBU Sports Speed Series S5-M
WEBSITE: www.giants.com
TICKETS: 1-201-935-8222
TRAINING CAMP: Quest Diagnostic Training Center (East Rutherford, N.J.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Ben McAdoo
RECORD WITH TEAM: 11–5
CAREER RECORD: 11–5
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Mike Sullivan
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Steve Spagnuolo
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Tom Quinn
QUARTERBACKS: Frank Cignetti Jr.
RUNNING BACKS: Craig Johnson
WIDE RECEIVERS: Adam Henry
TIGHT ENDS: Kevin M. Gilbride
OFFENSIVE LINE: Mike Solari
DEFENSIVE LINE: Patrick Graham
LINEBACKERS: Bill McGovern
SECONDARY/CORNERBACKS: Tim Walton
SECONDARY/SAFETIES: David Merritt

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE / 2016 NFL RANKINGS

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	at Dallas	8:30	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Sept. 18	Detroit (Mon.)	8:30	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Sept. 24	at Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Oct. 1	at Tampa Bay	4:05	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Oct. 8	L.A. Chargers	1:00	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Oct. 15	at Denver	8:30	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Oct. 22	Seattle	4:25	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
BYE							
Nov. 5	L.A. Rams	1:00	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Nov. 12	at San Francisco	4:25	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Nov. 19	Kansas City	1:00	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Nov. 23	at Washington (Thu.)	8:30	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Dec. 3	at Oakland	4:25	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Dec. 10	Dallas	4:25	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Dec. 17	Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Dec. 24	at Arizona	4:25	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Dec. 31	Washington	1:00	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)

WR ODELL BECKHAM JR.

2016 RESULTS (11-5)

Sept. 11	at Dallas	W	20-19
Sept. 18	New Orleans	W	16-13
Sept. 25	Washington	L	27-29
Oct. 3	at Minnesota	L	10-24
Oct. 9	at Green Bay	L	16-23
Oct. 16	Baltimore	W	27-23
Oct. 23	at L.A. Rams	W	17-10
Nov. 6	Philadelphia	W	28-23
Nov. 14	Cincinnati	W	21-20
Nov. 20	Chicago	W	22-16
Nov. 27	at Cleveland	W	27-13
Dec. 4	at Pittsburgh	L	14-24
Dec. 11	Dallas	W	10-7
Dec. 18	Detroit	W	17-6
Dec. 22	at Philadelphia	L	19-24
Jan. 1	at Washington	W	19-10
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 8	at Green Bay	L	13-38

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Eli Manning	598	377	4,027	26	16
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Rashad Jennings	181	593	3.3	3	
Paul Perkins	112	456	4.1	0	
Shane Vereen	33	158	4.8	1	
Orleans Darkwa	30	111	3.7	2	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Odell Beckham	101	1,367	13.5	10	
Sterling Shepard	65	683	10.5	8	
Will Tye	48	395	8.2	1	
Victor Cruz	39	586	15.0	1	
Rashad Jennings	35	201	5.7	1	

KICKING: Robbie Gould, 10-10 FGs, 20-23 PAT, 50 points
TACKLES: Landon Collins, 125; Jonathan Casillas, 96
SACKS: Olivier Vernon, 8.5; Jason Pierre-Paul, 7.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie, 6; Landon Collins, 5

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	330.7	25	13
Rushing	88.2	29	13
Passing	242.4	17	10
Scoring	19.4	26	13
Third Down %	35.6	28	14
Punt Returns	6.1	T29	T15
Kick Returns	23.8	T7	4

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	339.7	10	5
Rushing	88.6	T3	2
Passing	251.1	23	10
Scoring	17.8	2	1
Interceptions	17	T4	T1
Sacks	35	T14	10
Turnover Differential	-2	T21	T11

ELI MANNING

a sports hernia. The shame of that injury was that the Giants' pass rush was just beginning to kick into gear when JPP got hurt. If he's back at full strength, he and Olivier Vernon are a dangerous pass-rushing duo, especially with Harrison causing problems in the middle of the line.

The defense's strength, though, is the secondary, which locked down everyone right up until the second half of the playoff loss in Green Bay. Not only is a unit anchored by corner Janoris Jenkins and safety Landon Collins back intact, but it could also be even better this season with the return of Darian Thompson, a promising safety whose rookie season was ruined by a foot injury. With Thompson and Collins providing the last line of defense behind Jenkins, Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie and Eli Apple, there won't be much room for receivers to get open.

And if the Giants can generate a pass rush? Look out.

One word of warning, though: The defense is not deep at all, which is why JPP and Vernon were forced to play more than 90 percent of the defensive snaps last season. The secondary is a bit on the thin side too. The Giants were able to mostly survive their one big injury (JPP) last season. There's no guarantee they could survive a big hit again.

SPECIALISTS Brad Wing became a weapon at punter last season, showing off a strong leg capable of high, arching punts while also becoming an expert at dropping them inside the 20. For most of the season, he seemed to have a knack for making his kicks unreturnable, or at least keeping them up just long enough for the coverage teams to get downfield.

Unfortunately there's not much else to like about the Giants special teams. The Josh Brown scandal last season forced them to jettison one of the most accurate kickers in team history, and they wouldn't spend the money necessary to keep veteran Robbie Gould for the 2017 season. The replacement is Aldrick Rosas, a first-year player who has never kicked in an NFL game. It's hard to imagine a team that believes it's ready for a Super Bowl entrusting such an important position to someone so green. Surely they will have their eyes on any veteran kickers who come available.

Meanwhile, they could use a boost to their return game as well. Dwayne Harris has been respectable but not necessarily explosive, and while he rarely misses games, he's often banged up. Maybe the return to health of running back Shane Vereen will help if he's used on kickoff returns. Really, though, the Giants' most dangerous returner last season was Beckham, who saw sporadic action on the punt return team. He's an intriguing option, but a dangerous one. Other than Manning, he's the Giants' most valuable offensive player. No one wants to see him get hurt fielding a punt.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Giants have the same personnel on defense that they had last season and better weapons on offense, so there's no reason to believe they won't be in the thick of the NFC East race again. But they don't want to just make the playoffs — they want to win games and make a Super Bowl run.

That ultimate goal, however, might not be realistic. Their offensive line remains a mess, which will keep Manning under pressure, cause problems for their running game and limit what they can do in key situations. They have downfield weapons, but there might not be time for them to get the ball. They have running backs with burst, but they may not have the holes to run through.

This team is good enough to win 10 games and keep pace with the Cowboys in the division race. Don't count on anything more than that barring significant improvement from the offensive line.

Beckham: Al Bello/Getty Images; Patrick Smith/Getty Images

2017 VETERAN GIANTS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
8 Johnson, Josh	QB	6-3	215	6	San Diego	FA-16	D5-TB-08
10 Manning, Eli	QB	6-4	218	13	Ole Miss	T-LAC-04	D1-LAC-04
3 Smith, Geno	QB	6-3	221	4	West Virginia	FA-NYJ-17	D2-NYJ-13
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
26 Darkwa, Orleans	RB	6-0	215	3	Tulane	FA-14	FA-Mia-14
25 Draughn, Shaun	RB	5-11	205	5	North Carolina	FA-SF-17	FA-Was-11
48 Huesman, Jacob	RB	6-1	216	1	Chattanooga	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
28 Perkins, Paul	RB	5-10	208	1	UCLA	D5-16	D5-NYG-16
34 Vereen, Shane	RB	5-10	205	6	California	FA-15	D2-NE-11
35 Virgies, Daryl	RB	6-0	211	1	Virginia-Lynchburg	FA-17	FA-NYG-17
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
89 Adams, Jerell	TE	6-5	247	1	South Carolina	D6-16	D6-NYG-16
13 Beckham Jr., Odell	WR	5-11	198	3	LSU	D1-14	D1-NYG-14
85 Ellison, Rhett	TE/FB	6-5	250	5	USC	FA-Min-17	D4b-Min-12
17 Harris, Dwayne	WR	5-10	202	6	East Carolina	FA-15	D6-Dal-11
15 King, Tavarres	WR	6-1	200	2	Georgia	FA-15	D5-Den-13
81 LaCosse, Matt	TE	6-5	261	2	Illinois	FA-16	FA-NYG-15
82 Lewis Jr., Roger	WR	6-0	196	1	Bowling Green	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
15 Marshall, Brandon	WR	6-4	230	11	UCF	FA-NYJ-17	D4-Den-06
83 Norwood, Kevin	WR	6-2	210	3	Alabama	FA-16	D4-Sea-14
86 Powe, Darius	WR	6-3	220	1	California	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
87 Shepard, Sterling	WR	5-10	194	1	Oklahoma	D2-16	D2-NYG-16
45 Tye, Will	TE	6-2	262	2	Stony Brook	FA-15	FA-NYG-15
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
63 Bowie, Michael	T	6-5	320	1	Northeastern St.	FA-17	D7-Sea-13
74 Flowers, Ereck	T	6-6	329	2	Miami	D1-15	D1-NYG-15
76 Fluker, D.J.	G/T	6-5	339	4	Alabama	FA-LAC-17	D1-LAC-13
60 Gettis, Adam	G/T	6-2	305	5	Iowa	FA-16	D5-Was-12
75 Halapio, Jon	T	6-2	320	3	Florida	FA-16	D6-NE-14
68 Hart, Bobby	G/T	6-4	334	2	Florida State	D7-15	D7-NYG-15
62 Holmes, Khaled	C	6-3	309	3	USC	FA-17	D4-Ind-13
77 Jerry, John	G/T	6-5	340	7	Ole Miss	FA-14	D3-Mia-10
69 Jones, Brett	C	6-2	318	2	Regina	FA-15	FA-NYG-15
67 Pugh, Justin	G	6-4	301	4	Syracuse	D1-13	D1-NYG-13
70 Richburg, Weston	C	6-3	298	3	Colorado State	D2-14	D2-NYG-14
64 Wallace, Martin	T	6-6	311	1	Temple	FA-17	FA-Cle-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
96 Bromley, Jay	DT	6-3	306	3	Syracuse	D3-14	D3-NYG-14
98 Harrison, Damon	DT	6-4	343	5	William Penn	FA-NYJ-16	FA-NYJ-12
71 Maponga, Stansly	DE	6-2	265	4	TCU	FA-16	D5-Atl-13
58 Odighizuwa, Owa	DE	6-3	270	2	UCLA	D3-15	D3-NYG-15
78 Okwara, Romeo	DE	6-5	265	1	Notre Dame	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
90 Pierre-Paul, Jason	DE	6-5	278	7	South Florida	D1-10	D1-NYG-10
99 Thomas, Robert	DT	6-3	325	3	Arkansas	FA-16	FA-Was-14
54 Vernon, Olivier	DE	6-2	275	5	Miami	FA-16	D3a-Mia-12
79 Williams, Jordan	DE	6-4	276	1	Tennessee	FA-16	FA-NYJ-15
72 Wynn, Kerry	DE	6-5	264	3	Richmond	FA-14	FA-NYG-14
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
52 Casillas, Jonathan	LB	6-1	227	8	Wisconsin	FA-15	FA-NO-09
49 Grant, Curtis	LB	6-3	238	1	Ohio State	FA-17	FA-SD-15
93 Goodson, B.J.	LB	6-1	242	1	Clemson	D4-16	D4-NYG-16
94 Herzlich, Mark	LB	6-4	246	6	Boston College	FA-11	FA-NYG-11
59 Kennard, Devon	LB	6-3	251	3	USC	D5b-14	D5b-NYG-14
48 Pinkens, Eric	LB	6-3	230	2	San Diego State	FA-16	D6-Sea-14
57 Robinson, Keenan	LB	6-3	238	5	Texas	FA-16	D4-Was-12
53 Skinner, Deontae	LB	6-2	250	2	Mississippi State	FA-16	FA-NE-14
55 Thomas, J.T.	LB	6-1	236	6	West Virginia	FA-15	D6-Chi-11
61 Williams, Ishaq	LB	6-4	253	1	Notre Dame	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
33 Adams, Andrew	S	5-11	202	1	Connecticut	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
24 Apple, Eli	CB	6-1	199	1	Ohio State	D1-16	D1-NYG-16
29 Berhe, Nat	S	6-0	194	3	San Diego State	D5-14	D5-NYG-14
47 Blake, Valentino	CB	5-9	198	5	UTEP	FA-Ten-17	FA-Jac-12
21 Collins, Landon	S	6-0	216	2	Alabama	D2-15	D2-NYG-15
38 Deayon, Donte	CB	5-9	158	1	Boise State	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
39 Hunter, Michael	CB	6-0	186	1	Oklahoma State	FA-16	FA-NYG-16
20 Jenkins, Janoris	CB	5-10	198	5	North Alabama	FA-LAR-16	D2b-LA-12
23 Moore, Rahim	S	6-1	195	5	UCLA	FA-17	D2-Den-11
41 Rodgers-Cromartie, Dominique	CB	6-2	193	9	Tennessee State	FA-14	D1-Ari-08
27 Thompson, Darian	S	6-1	213	1	Boise State	D3-16	D3-NYG-16
22 Thompson, Mykkele	S	6-0	193	2	Texas	D5-15	D5-NYG-15
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
51 DeOssie, Zak	LS	6-4	249	10	Brown	D4-07	D4-NYG-07
2 Rosas, Aldrick	K	6-2	195	1	Southern Oregon	FA-17	FA-Ten-16
9 Wing, Brad	P	6-3	205	3	LSU	T-Pit-15	FA-Phi-13

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	13	Odell Beckham Jr.	12	Tavarres King
WR	15	Brandon Marshall	87	Sterling Shepard
LT	74	Ereck Flowers		Adam Bisnowaty (R)
LG	67	Justin Pugh	60	Adam Gettis
C	70	Weston Richburg	69	Brett Jones
RG	76	D.J. Fluker	77	John Jerry
RT	68	Bobby Hart	77	John Jerry
TE		Evan Engram (R)	45	Will Tye
QB	10	Eli Manning	8	Josh Johnson
RB	28	Paul Perkins		Wayne Gallman (R)
FB	85	Rhett Ellison		

DEFENSE

DE	90	Jason Pierre-Paul	78	Romeo Okwara
DT	98	Damon Harrison	96	Jay Bromley
DT		Dalvin Tomlinson (R)	99	Robert Thomas
DE	54	Olivier Vernon		Avery Moss (R)
OLB	59	Devon Kennard	55	J.T. Thomas
MLB	93	B.J. Goodson	94	Mark Herzlich
OLB	52	Jonathan Casillas	57	Keenan Robinson
CB	20	Janoris Jenkins	47	Valentino Blake
CB	24	Eli Apple	41	Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie
S	21	Landon Collins	33	Andrew Adams
S	27	Darian Thompson	29	Nat Berhe

SPECIALISTS

K	2	Aldrick Rosas	KR	34	Shane Vereen
P	9	Brad Wing	PR	17	Dwayne Harris

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
CB	Valentino Blake	Tennessee
RB	Shaun Draughn	San Francisco
TE	Rhett Ellison	Minnesota
OL	D.J. Fluker	San Diego
WR	Brandon Marshall	N.Y. Jets
QB	Geno Smith	N.Y. Jets

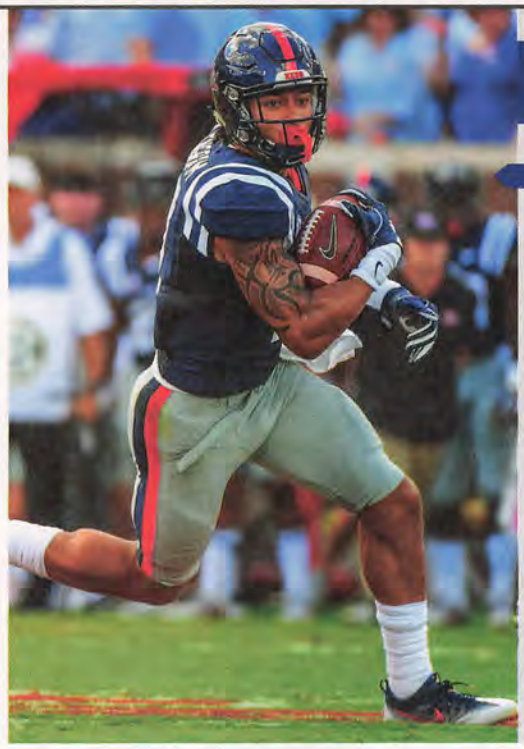
KEY LOSSES −

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
K	Robbie Gould	San Francisco
DT	Johnathan Hankins	Indianapolis
OT	Marshall Newhouse	Oakland
CB	Coty Sensabaugh	Pittsburgh

SCOUTING THE GIANTS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP NEW YORK "The Giants made the playoffs despite paltry rushing numbers and a poor third-down conversion rate, but they were [second] in the league with the fewest number of penalties. ... Head coach Ben McAdoo wanted to address the left tackle position in the offseason, but it appears that Ereck Flowers will get one more chance to secure the job. ... In Odell Beckham Jr., they have one of the league's top talents; however, he went off the rails last year at times, so the addition of Brandon Marshall, who has fought his own demons, should help with OBJ's focus and maturity. Sterling Shepard did a nice job as their slot receiver and he should progress rapidly as a second-year player. ... General manager Jerry Reese selected Ole Miss tight end Evan Engram in the first round, and he is a legit speed merchant who ran 4.42 at the Combine. ... It appears that Paul Perkins will get the first crack at the running back job in his second season. ... In 2016, they dove into free agency and it actually paid off with the additions of defensive tackle Damon Harrison, defensive end Olivier Vernon and Janoris Jenkins at cornerback. ... Landon Collins is all football player, and he put together a Pro Bowl campaign in 2016 with 125 tackles, four sacks and five interceptions. ... Defensive coordinator Steve Spagnuolo did an awesome job of fitting all the new pieces together as they finished second in scoring defense. ... If the offense can be more productive on first down, which will help them on third down, that combination can keep the defense off the field and fresher down the stretch. ... This team is poised to take a deep step into the playoffs, but I still don't trust their offensive line to actually get it done."

Engram: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Collins: Rob Leiter via Getty Images



GIANTS IN THE *DRAFT*

C-

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Evan Engram	TE	6-3	234	Ole Miss
2.	Dalvin Tomlinson	DT	6-4	320	Alabama
3.	Davis Webb	QB	6-5	229	California
4.	Wayne Gallman	RB	6-0	215	Clemson
5.	Avery Moss	DE	6-3	265	Youngstown State
6.	Adam Bisnowaty	OT	6-6	304	Pittsburgh

The Giants filled a huge need with Dalvin Tomlinson, who takes the place of the departed Johnathan Hankins and could be a terrific run-stuffer next to All-Pro defensive tackle Damon Harrison. It's unclear how much the others will help. Evan Engram could be a speedy, over-the-middle weapon, but he's more of a fourth wide receiver than a prototypical tight end. There may not be much room in a crowded offense. Same for Clemson product Wayne Gallman, who'll get a few carries as the No. 2 running back. Davis Webb may be the key to this class, but the Giants don't want him to start until 2020. He posted huge numbers in his only season at California. He transferred from Texas Tech after losing his starting position to Patrick Mahomes, taken with the No. 10 pick in the 2017 draft by the Chiefs.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

GOOD HEALTH The Giants' biggest improvement last season may have come in the training room. After leading the NFL in injuries for three straight seasons, according to a metric used by Football Outsiders, they were the seventh-least-injured team in 2016. Some of that was due to luck, but when Ben McAdoo took over as coach he also brought in a new strength and conditioning coach and modernized that and the Giants' nutrition program, which players are convinced was a big help.

NAME GAME To Janoris Jenkins, his nickname —"Jackrabbit" — is more than just a nickname. It's his preferred name, so much that he corrects people who call him Janoris. He got the nickname in college when a coach told him he was running around the field as fast as a jackrabbit. Also, in his hometown of Pahokee, Fla., he used to chase rabbits out in a field for fun.

LB DROUGHT The Giants' remarkable streak continued for a 33rd year. When they selected tight end Evan Engram in the first round of the NFL Draft this year, it marked their 33rd straight draft in which they have not selected a linebacker in the first round. A franchise once known for its linebackers hasn't had a first-rounder on that unit since they took Carl Banks in the first round in 1984.

MR. EVERYTHING Rookie defensive tackle Dalvin Tomlinson, the Giants' second-round pick, is 6'4", 320 pounds, but not that long ago (nor many pounds ago) he was a soccer goalie. He played that position in high school when he was an intimidating 6'2", 270. He also ran track, was a wrestling champion and was smart enough that he was recruited by Harvard before he chose to play for Alabama.

WELL SAID Brandon Marshall wowed NFL owners in March with a passionate speech at the NFL Owners Meetings. He talked about the relationship between owners and players and how to make it better. He also endorsed the "My cause, my cleats" campaign where players were allowed to wear custom cleats that advertised their favorite charity or cause last season.

PREDICTABLE How predictable was the Giants' offense last season? They lined up in an "11 personnel" package — three receivers, one tight end, one running back — more than 90 percent of the time, according to most counts. Amazingly, when they faced a fourth-and-1 or fourth-and-2 — which typically calls for a power formation — they lined up in that package all seven times.

TOBACCO ROAD Eli Manning held his annual offseason mini-camp for his receivers at Duke University in April, and he was joined by most of his receivers and tight ends. Also in attendance was new Giants running back Shaun Draughn, who took some heat on social media for allowing himself to be pictured on a basketball court at Duke. Draughn played college football at North Carolina.

GOOD GUY Manning was the co-winner of the NFL's Walter Payton Man of the Year Award, which was presented the night before Super Bowl LI. Manning, who had been a finalist in two straight years, was, remarkably, the first Giants player ever to win the award.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

3.9 The Giants ranked second in the NFL in Adjusted Sack Rate, allowing only 3.9 percent of their pass snaps to become sacks.

25.6 The Giants' defense pressured the opposing quarterback on 25.6 percent of dropbacks, the sixth-highest rate in the league

31 The Giants went three-and-out on 31 percent of offensive drives, the second-highest rate in the league.

LANDON COLLINS

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

NFC EAST FORECAST

4

If the Eagles' moves ahead of the 2017 season tell us anything, it's that the protection of a franchise quarterback is paramount to management, coaches and just about everybody else in the city. Despite sizable holes on the defensive side and a dearth of talent at running back, the Birds decided to spend big on wideouts and fortify the offensive line in free agency while addressing their other needs through second-tier free agents and the draft. The reasoning was clearly that if quarterback Carson Wentz is happy, the team has a chance at future prosperity. If the second-year man from North Dakota State does not continue to develop — and more important, stay happy — the Eagles don't have a chance.

It's possible Philadelphia could sneak into the playoffs this year, but it's clear the organization has decided on the long play, with Wentz at the forefront, and everything else coming together behind him.

OFFENSE Wentz set an NFL rookie record for most completions in a season (379) while posting the fourth-most passing yards (3,782) for a first-year player in league history. He started every game, and while his completion percentage dipped as the season progressed and he had some issues with mechanics, Wentz's rookie season was a success by any measure.

The Eagles decided during the offseason to invest their limited salary cap space on some receivers for him to target. Last year's crop of wideouts was disappointing, and that's being kind. Second-year man Nelson Agholor was overmatched, to the point where he was a healthy scratch one week. Dorial Green-Beckham was wildly inconsistent, and even though Jordan Matthews caught 73 balls, he averaged a meager 11.0 yards per reception. So, the Eagles went shopping and purchased Alshon Jeffery for $14 million for one season and Torrey Smith for $15 million over three seasons. They also added a couple of prospects via the draft.

Jeffery is a big target who will help in the red zone, goes over the middle willingly and can be considered a No. 1 receiver, even if he did score just two times last year. Smith, meanwhile, has speed, but his catches have dropped in each of the past three seasons. Last year, he caught just 20 passes for the Niners. Still, this is an upgrade.

As usual, Zach Ertz looked good at the end of 2016, when the games didn't matter, and led the team with 78 receptions. But he must become more consistent and deliver in more important situations. Don't expect too much early on from Mack Hollins of North Carolina and Shelton Gibson from West Virginia. Hollins has good size (6'4", 221) and some speed, while Gibson is a burner, but neither is ready to be a standout in 2017.

By the end of last year, the Eagles' running back situation was a mess. Ryan Mathews' neck injury made him unlikely to remain a member of this year's squad, and there was no full-fledged meal ticket behind him. The Eagles head into 2017 with Darren Sproles, a veteran hybrid unable to handle many carries a game, and second-year man Wendell Smallwood, who didn't distinguish himself last year and lacks size, as their holdovers. Although fourth-round pick Donnel Pumphrey rushed for more yards than anyone in FBS history and is elusive and fast, he is only 5'8" and 176 pounds. He is expected to be a next-generation Sproles, rather than a workhorse.

There won't be too many surprises on the offensive line. During the offseason, GM Howie Roseman insisted that center Jason Kelce would return in the middle. He'll likely be flanked by Brandon Brooks and Allen Barbre, with Lane Johnson and ancient Jason Peters at the tackles. But there are variables involved. Johnson missed 10 games last year after being suspended for his second PED violation. One more, and he's gone for two years. Peters is a future Hall of Famer, but at some point his aching back and age will betray him. Look for second-year men Isaac Seumalo, a guard, and tackle Halapoulivaati Vaitai to get plenty of opportunities to grab starting jobs. Meanwhile, free-agent signee Chance Warmack and Stefen Wisniewski will handle swing work in the middle.

THE ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN/CEO: Jeffrey Lurie
PRESIDENT: Don Smolenski
EXECUTIVE VP OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS: Howie Roseman
VICE PRESIDENT OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Joe Douglas
STADIUM: Lincoln Financial Field (69,176)
SURFACE: Desso GrassMaster
WEBSITE: www.philadelphiaeagles.com
TICKETS: 1-215-463-5500
TRAINING CAMP: NovaCare Training Complex (Philadelphia, Pa.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Doug Pederson
RECORD WITH TEAM: 7–9
CAREER RECORD: 7–9
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Frank Reich
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Jim Schwartz
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Dave Fipp
QUARTERBACKS: John DeFilippo
RUNNING BACKS: Duce Staley
WIDE RECEIVERS: Mike Groh
TIGHT ENDS: Justin Peelle
OFFENSIVE LINE: Jeff Stoutland
DEFENSIVE LINE: Chris Wilson
LINEBACKERS: Ken Flajole
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Cory Undlin

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
			2016 NFL RANKINGS				
Sept. 10	at Washington	1:00	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Sept. 17	at Kansas City	1:00	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
Sept. 24	N.Y. Giants	1:00	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Oct. 1	at L.A. Chargers	4:05	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Oct. 8	Arizona	1:00	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Oct. 12	at Carolina (Thu.)	8:25	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Oct. 23	Washington (Mon.)	8:30	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Oct. 29	San Francisco	1:00	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Nov. 5	Denver	1:00	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
BYE							
Nov. 19	at Dallas	8:30	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Nov. 26	Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Dec. 3	at Seattle	8:30	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Dec. 10	at L.A. Rams	4:25	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Dec. 17	at N.Y. Giants	1:00	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Dec. 25	Oakland (Mon.)	8:30	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Dec. 31	Dallas	1:00	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)

W. E. Smith III

QB CARSON WENTZ

2016 RESULTS (7-9)

Sept. 11	Cleveland	W	29-10
Sept. 19	at Chicago	W	29-14
Sept. 25	Pittsburgh	W	34-3
Oct. 9	at Detroit	L	23-24
Oct. 16	at Washington	L	20-27
Oct. 23	Minnesota	W	21-10
Oct. 30	at Dallas (ot)	L	23-29
Nov. 6	at N.Y. Giants	L	23-28
Nov. 13	Atlanta	W	24-15
Nov. 20	at Seattle	L	15-26
Nov. 28	Green Bay	L	13-27
Dec. 4	at Cincinnati	L	14-32
Dec. 11	Washington	L	22-27
Dec. 18	at Baltimore	L	26-27
Dec. 22	N.Y. Giants	W	24-19
Jan. 1	Dallas	W	27-13

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Carson Wentz	607	379	3,782	16	14
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Ryan Mathews	155	661	4.3	8	
Darren Sproles	94	438	4.7	2	
Wendell Smallwood	77	312	4.1	1	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Zach Ertz	78	816	10.5	4	
Jordan Matthews	73	804	11.0	3	
Darren Sproles	52	427	8.2	2	
Trey Burton	37	327	8.8	1	
Dorial Green-Beckham	36	392	10.9	2	
Nelson Agholor	36	365	10.1	2	

KICKING: Caleb Sturgis, 35-41 FGs, 30-31 PAT, 135 points
TACKLES: Nigel Bradham, 102; Jordan Hicks, 85
SACKS: Fletcher Cox, 6.5; Brandon Graham, 5.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Jordan Hicks, 5; Two players tied with 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	337.4	22	12
Rushing	113.3	11	5
Passing	224.1	24	14
Scoring	22.9	16	8
Third Down %	37.9	20	11
Punt Returns	12.9	2	1
Kick Returns	27.3	T1	T1

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	342.8	13	6
Rushing	103.2	15	8
Passing	239.5	13	6
Scoring	20.7	12	5
Interceptions	16	T9	5
Sacks	34	T16	T11
Turnover Differential	+6	T7	4

ZACH ERTZ

DEFENSE The Eagles weren't awful defensively last year, finishing 12th in points allowed and 13th in yards surrendered. However, there is no doubt the team has some serious deficiencies at several positions.

The biggest problem area is cornerback, which was a huge liability last year and allowed opposing quarterbacks to connect on 60.2 percent of their throws. The departures of Nolan Carroll and Leodis McKelvin did not disappoint any fans, but there is a good chance things won't be much better this year. Ron Brooks is back, to little fanfare, and the offseason acquisition of Patrick Robinson, who is on his fourth team in as many years, isn't a long-term solution. Philadelphia drafted two corners in April, Rasul Douglas from West Virginia and Washington's Sidney Jones. Jones tore his Achilles during his pro day workout and fell from the first round to the Birds at pick 43. He has great skills and could be a Pro Bowler once healthy. Fans shouldn't expect him to be 100 percent this season, although he could contribute in 2017. Second-year man Jalen Mills has talent but must become more consistent. The return of safeties Malcolm Jenkins and Rodney McLeod solidify that area. McLeod is a big hitter, and the versatile Jenkins makes plays all over the field.

There is concern at linebacker, too. While middle man Jordan Hicks is quickly becoming a dynamic force in all facets of the game, there isn't much around him. Veteran Nigel Bradham is solid in the run game but hardly a star, and Mychal Kendricks' inability to cover anybody is threatening to turn him from a favored prospect into a sideline spectator. The Eagles selected Nebraska safety Nate Gerry in the fifth round and hope to convert him into a coverage linebacker. If he shows some aptitude for the role, he'll get immediate time.

Defensive coordinator Jim Schwartz favors the Wide-Nine alignment with his defense, with the goal of creating maximum pressure on opposing quarterbacks, and the Eagles' offseason moves were made with that philosophy in mind. They signed aging end Chris Long, who will be used primarily as a pass-rushing specialist, and traded with Baltimore for tackle Timmy Jernigan, who has the potential to reach the quarterbacks, although consistency has been a recent problem for him.

Though many thought the Eagles would spend their first-round pick on a receiver or cornerback, they went with end Derek Barnett, who set the all-time Tennessee sack mark. Barnett can play the pass and run and has plenty of room to grow, since he turns 21 in late June. The newcomers join standout tackle Fletcher Cox, a Pro Bowler who stars despite facing an onslaught of double-teams and extra attention. Also back is end Brandon Graham, who continues to improve but has yet to make good on his first-round pedigree. Another end, Vinny Curry, was paid starter's money last year but registered only 2.5 sacks.

SPECIALISTS The Eagles have one of the league's top special teams. Punter Donnie Jones has a big, reliable leg, and placekicker Caleb Sturgis made 35-of-41 kicks and didn't miss from inside 40. Sproles is an electric return man, and Philadelphia's coverage units are outstanding.

FINAL ANALYSIS Early in the offseason, Roseman declared the Eagles not ready for real contention during 2017, and his assessment is right. Despite having what it believes is a franchise QB in Wentz, Philadelphia lacks proven playmakers. The defense is shaky throughout much of the back seven and must hope the front four can apply enough pressure to prevent rival passing attacks from thriving. Wentz will enjoy throwing to Jeffery and Smith, but with no proven ground game, he will face a parade of eager pass rushers. The Eagles finished 7–9 last year under first-year (and first-time) head coach Doug Pederson, and it's hard to believe they will do much better than that in 2017.

Patrick Smith/Getty Images

2017 VETERAN EAGLES ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
3 McGloin, Matt	QB	6-1	210	4	Penn State	FA-Oak-17	FA-Oak-13
11 Wentz, Carson	QB	6-5	237	1	North Dakota St.	D1-16	D1-Phi-16
9 Foles, Nick	QB	6-6	243	5	Arizona	FA-KC-17	D3-Phi-12
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
39 Marshall, Byron	RB	5-9	201	1	Oregon	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
24 Mathews, Ryan	RB	6-0	220	7	Fresno State	FA-LAC-15	D1-LAC-10
28 Smallwood, Wendell	RB	5-10	208	1	West Virginia	D5a-16	D5a-Phi-16
43 Sproles, Darren	RB	5-6	190	12	Kansas State	T-NO-14	D4-LAC-05
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
13 Agholor, Nelson	WR	6-0	198	2	USC	D1-15	D1-Phi-15
89 Bailey, Rasheed	WR	6-1	209	1	Delaware Valley	FA-17	FA-Phi-16
47 Burton, Trey	TE	6-3	235	3	Florida	FA-14	FA-Phi-14
87 Celek, Brent	TE	6-4	255	10	Cincinnati	D5b-07	D5b-Phi-07
83 Denham, Anthony	TE	6-4	235	1	Utah	FA-16	FA-Hou-14
86 Ertz, Zach	TE	6-5	250	4	Stanford	D2-13	D2-Phi-13
18 Green-Beckham, Dorial	WR	6-5	237	2	Oklahoma	T-Ten-16	D2-Ten-15
17 Jeffery, Alshon	WR	6-3	218	5	South Carolina	FA-Chi-17	D2-Chi-12
84 Johnson, Marcus	WR	6-1	204	1	Texas	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
81 Matthews, Jordan	WR	6-3	212	3	Vanderbilt	D2-14	D2-Phi-14
82 Smith, Torrey	WR	6-0	205	6	Maryland	FA-SF-17	D2-Bal-11
16 Treggs, Bryce	WR	6-0	185	1	California	W-SF-16	FA-SF-16
19 Turner, Paul	WR	5-10	193	1	Louisiana Tech	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
14 Watford, David	WR	6-2	212	1	Hampton	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
80 Williams, Dom	WR	6-2	200	1	Washington State	FA-17	FA-LAC-14
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
68 Andrews, Josh	C/G	6-2	311	2	Oregon State	FA-14	FA-Phi-14
76 Barbre, Allen	G/T	6-4	310	9	Missouri Southern	FA-13	D4-GB-07
79 Brooks, Brandon	G	6-5	335	5	Miami (OH)	FA-Hou-16	D3b-Hou-12
69 Gordon, Dillon	T	6-4	322	1	LSU	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
78 Greene, Darrell	G	6-3	321	1	San Diego State	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
65 Johnson, Lane	T	6-6	317	4	Oklahoma	D1-13	D1-Phi-13
62 Kelce, Jason	C	6-3	295	6	Cincinnati	D6a-11	D6a-Phi-11
74 Neary, Aaron	C	6-4	301	1	Eastern Washington	FA-16	FA-Den-16
71 Peters, Jason	T	6-4	328	13	Arkansas	T-Buf-09	FA-Buf-04
73 Seumalo, Isaac	G/T	6-4	303	1	Oregon State	D3-16	D3-Phi-16
63 Thomas, Dallas	G	6-5	316	4	Tennessee	FA-17	D3-Mia-13
64 Tobin, Matt	G/T	6-6	290	4	Iowa	FA-13	FA-Phi-13
72 Vaitai, Halapoulivaati	T	6-6	320	1	TCU	D5b-16	D5b-Phi-16
67 Warmack, Chance	G	6-2	323	4	Alabama	FA-Ten-17	D1-Ten-13
61 Wisniewski, Stefen	C/G	6-3	305	6	Penn State	FA-Jac-16	D2-Oak-11
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
94 Allen, Beau	DT	6-3	327	3	Wisconsin	D7-14	D7-Phi-14
91 Cox, Fletcher	DT	6-4	310	5	Mississippi State	D1-12	D1-Phi-12
75 Curry, Vinny	DE	6-3	279	5	Marshall	D2b-12	D2b-Phi-12
55 Graham, Brandon	DE	6-2	265	7	Michigan	D1-10	D1-Phi-10
66 Hamilton, Justin	DT	6-2	315	1	UL Lafayette	FA-17	FA-Buf-15
93 Jernigan, Timmy	DT	6-2	295	3	Florida State	T-Bal-17	D2-Bal-14
77 Hart, Taylor	DT	6-6	305	3	Oregon	W-SF-16	D5a-Phi-14
56 Long, Chris	DE	6-3	270	9	Virginia	FA-NE-17	D1-LAR-08
57 McCalister, Alex	DE	6-6	239	1	Florida	D7b-16	D7b-Phi-16
51 Means, Steven	DE	6-3	263	2	Buffalo	PS-Hou-15	D5-TB-13
98 Shittu, Aziz	DT	6-2	288	1	Stanford	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
90 Smith, Marcus	DE	6-3	251	3	Louisville	D1-14	D1-Phi-14
97 Vaeao, Destiny	DT	6-4	299	1	Washington State	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
53 Bradham, Nigel	LB	6-2	241	5	Florida State	FA-Buf-16	D4-Buf-12
48 Cherry, Don	LB	6-2	240	1	Villanova	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
Daniels, Steven	LB	5-11	245	1	Boston College	W-Was-17	D7a-Was-16
52 Goode, Najee	LB	6-0	244	5	West Virginia	W-TB-13	D5-TB-12
54 Grugier-Hill, Kamu	LB	6-2	220	1	Eastern Illinois	W-NE-16	D6-NE-16
58 Hicks, Jordan	LB	6-1	236	2	Texas	D3-15	D3-Phi-15
95 Kendricks, Mychal	LB	6-0	240	5	California	D2a-12	D2a-Phi-12
59 Walker, Joe	LB	6-2	236	1	Oregon	D7c-16	D7c-Phi-16
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
33 Brooks, Ron	CB	5-10	190	5	LSU	FA-Buf-16	D4a-Buf-12
29 Brooks, Terrence	S	5-11	200	3	Florida State	W-Bal-16	D3-Bal-14
36 Gratz, Dwayne	CB	5-11	199	4	Connecticut	FA-16	D3-Jac-13
38 Grymes, Aaron	CB	5-11	185	1	Idaho	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
27 Jenkins, Malcolm	S	6-0	204	8	Ohio State	FA-NO-14	D1-NO-09
42 Maragos, Chris	S	5-10	200	7	Wisconsin	FA-Sea-14	FA-SF-10
23 McLeod, Rodney	S	5-10	195	5	Virginia	FA-LAR-16	FA-LAR-12
21 Robinson, Patrick	CB	5-11	191	7	Florida State	FA-Ind-17	D1-NO-10
31 Mills, Jalen	CB	6-0	191	1	LSU	D7a-16	D7a-Phi-16
37 Smith, C.J.	CB	5-11	189	1	North Dakota St.	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
26 Watkins, Jaylen	S	5-11	194	2	Florida	D4-14	D4-Phi-14
41 White, Mitchell	CB	5-11	185	1	Michigan State	FA-17	FA-Phi-17
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
46 Dorenbos, Jon	LS	6-0	250	14	UTEP	FA-06	FA-Buf-03
8 Jones, Donnie	P	6-2	221	13	LSU	FA-Hou-13	D7-Sea-04
45 Lovato, Rick	LS	6-2	249	1	Old Dominion	FA-16	FA-Chi-15
6 Sturgis, Caleb	K	5-9	192	4	Florida	FA-15	D5b-Mia-13

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	17	Alshon Jeffery	18	Dorial Green-Beckham
WR	82	Torrey Smith	13	Nelson Agholor
WR	81	Jordan Matthews		Mack Hollins (R)
LT	71	Jason Peters	69	Dillon Gordon
LG	76	Allen Barbre	73	Isaac Seumalo
C	62	Jason Kelce	61	Stefen Wisniewski
RG	79	Brandon Brooks	67	Chance Warmack
RT	65	Lane Johnson	72	Halapoulivaati Vaitai
TE	86	Zach Ertz	87	Brent Celek
QB	11	Carson Wentz	9	Nick Foles
RB	28	Wendell Smallwood	43	Darren Sproles

DEFENSE

DE	56	Chris Long	75	Vinny Curry
DT	91	Fletcher Cox		Elijah Qualls (R)
DT	93	Timmy Jernigan	94	Beau Allen
DE	55	Brandon Graham	96	Derek Barnett (R)
OLB	53	Nigel Bradham	52	Najee Goode
MLB	58	Jordan Hicks	59	Joe Walker
OLB	95	Mychal Kendricks		Nate Gerry (R)
CB	31	Jalen Mills	36	Dwayne Gratz
CB	21	Patrick Robinson	33	Ron Brooks
FS	27	Malcolm Jenkins	26	Jaylen Watkins
SS	23	Rodney McLeod	42	Chris Maragos

SPECIALISTS

K	6	Caleb Sturgis	KR	13	Nelson Agholor
P	8	Donnie Jones	PR	43	Darren Sproles

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
QB	Nick Foles	Kansas City
WR	Alshon Jeffery	Chicago
DT	Timmy Jernigan	Baltimore
DE	Chris Long	New England
CB	Patrick Robinson	Indianapolis
WR	Torrey Smith	San Francisco
OG	Chance Warmack	Tennessee

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
RB	Kenjon Barner	L.A. Chargers
DE	Connor Barwin	L.A. Rams
CB	Nolan Carroll	Dallas
QB	Chase Daniel	New Orleans
WR	Josh Huff	Tampa Bay
DT	Bennie Logan	Kansas City
CB	Leodis McKelvin	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE EAGLES

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP PHILADELPHIA "Give the Eagles and general manager Howie Roseman credit for identifying and then going to get quarterback Carson Wentz last year, especially in light of the mediocre class of quarterbacks that were available in the 2017 draft. Wentz got off to a hot start, then opposing coordinators made some adjustments to defend him, but he showed remarkable promise and poise for a prospect coming from the small school ranks. ... The offensive line will continue to be led by Jason Peters, who has had an amazing career when you consider that he was an overweight and underperforming tight end at Arkansas. ... Philly made a run at bringing back DeSean Jackson but ended up adding Alshon Jeffery (Bears) and Torrey Smith (49ers) in free agency. With these two on board, Jordan Matthews won't carry the burden of being the No. 1 receiver after being forecast by most as a solid No. 2 coming out of Vanderbilt. ... The defense finished 12th in scoring defense despite not having a single dominant player. ... They signed defensive end Chris Long, traded for defensive tackle Timmy Jernigan and inked safety Rodney McLeod in free agency, then drafted Tennessee defensive end Derek Barnett in the first round and cornerback Sidney Jones in the second, despite him tearing his Achilles at the Washington pro day in March. ... Doug Pederson, like his quarterback, should be much better in Year 2 in making decisions and managing the game as a head coach rather than just majoring in calling plays. ... They can certainly be competitive, but I'm not sold they are a playoff team yet."

EAGLES IN THE *DRAFT*

C

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Derek Barnett	DE	6-3	259	Tennessee
2.	Sidney Jones	CB	6-0	186	Washington
3.	Rasul Douglas	CB	6-2	209	West Virginia
4.	Mack Hollins	WR	6-4	221	North Carolina
4.	Donnel Pumphrey	RB	5-8	176	San Diego State
5.	Shelton Gibson	WR	5-11	190	West Virginia
5.	Nate Gerry	LB	6-2	218	Nebraska
6.	Elijah Qualls	DT	6-1	313	Washington

Before the 2017 draft, Eagles GM Howie Roseman said the team would draft the best available players, rather than choosing to fill needs. Philadelphia did a little bit of both. They didn't necessarily need a defensive end, but they got a good one in the first round in Derek Barnett, a productive pass rusher who is regarded as a hard worker. If Sidney Jones' Achilles heals completely, he has the chance to be a long-term solution at cornerback. Rasul Douglas will have a better chance to play right away at corner due to Jones' injury. Mack Hollins and Shelton Gibson will bring depth to an area that desperately needs an upgrade, while Donnel Pumphrey, who rushed for 6,405 yards in college, has the potential to be an explosive third-down back. Elijah Qualls is large and agile along the defensive line, and Nate Gerry will try to make the switch from safety to linebacker, relying on his coverage skills in the process.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

IT TAKES TWO After presiding over some pretty ordinary — and a couple downright awful — drafts, Eagles GM Howie Roseman now has a capable wingman in VP of player personnel Joe Douglas. Douglas, who learned his craft in Baltimore, was a much-needed voice in the war room.

BACK TO THE FUTURE After bestowing an outrageous contract on Chase Daniel last year and then using him for exactly one pass attempt, the Eagles cut Daniel loose during the offseason and brought back Nick Foles, who had a spectacular 2013 season in Philadelphia and then fizzled after that. Barring an injury to starter Carson Wentz, Foles may get the same amount of work as Daniel did.

FOOTBALL SPEED One of the reasons West Virginia wideout Shelton Gibson fell to the fifth round was that his 4.5 40-yard dash time at the Scouting Combine was fast but not blow-the-top-off fast. Gibson says a wardrobe change would have helped him run a better time. "I think I should have put pads and a helmet on, because I am way faster with pads and a helmet on," he says.

SMALL FRAME, BIG BITE Even though San Diego State back Donnel Pumphrey set the all-time FBS rushing record during his time as an Aztec, his 5'8", 176-pound build worries many who think he won't be able to endure the NFL rigors. Douglas disagrees. "Don't let the size fool you," he says. "This guy is a little dog that thinks he's a big dog, and he plays that way."

I CAN SEE CLEARLY NOW Wentz spent his offseason fine-tuning his mechanics, watching a ton of tape and improving his eyesight. Wentz opted for laser eye surgery and no longer has to wear contact lenses on the field.

STOP RIGHT THERE How much does Eagles owner Jeffrey Lurie want to keep Wentz happy? Enough to prevent quarterbacks coach John DeFilippo from interviewing to be the Jets' offensive coordinator. Lurie doesn't want anything to upset Wentz, so he reportedly blocked DeFilippo's interview request. The coach has one year left on his deal, so if other NFL teams come knocking after 2017, Lurie can't do anything about it.

LOCAL HERO Even though he plies his trade 3,000 miles away, L.A. Angels slugger Mike Trout is a huge Eagles fan. He owns season tickets, and when The Ringer did its MLB preview, the Jersey native wanted to talk football. He was particularly happy that the Eagles signed Alshon Jeffery and Torrey Smith to give Wentz some help. "Obviously last year we were banged up a little bit," Trout said. "Now they have some guys Carson (Wentz) can throw the ball to. It put a lot of pressure on the young guys last year — (Nelson) Agholor and (Jordan) Matthews, put on a full workload. I knew how they felt, you know, coming into the league and being a professional. It just takes time. With Alshon and Torrey Smith coming in, it's going to help them a lot."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

24 A league-high 24 percent of the Eagles' runs went at left end, more than double the NFL average.

4.8/29.1 The Eagles' defense allowed a league-low 4.8 receptions and 29.1 yards per game to opposing tight ends.

32:31 The Eagles led the league in time of possession with an average of 32:31 per game.

MYCHAL KENDRICKS

Barnett: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Kendricks: Joe Robbins/Getty Images

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

NFC EAST FORECAST

3

Stop us if you've heard this one before: The Redskins once again led the league in offseason dysfunction. This time the intrigue centered on the abrupt firing of general manager Scot McCloughan just six weeks before the draft — which the Redskins turned into an even larger media circus by leaking anonymously that the dismissal was due to a relapse of McCloughan's alcohol issues.

As a result, a team that won its division in 2015 and remained in contention in 2016 until the final weekend — losing a win-or-go-home game against the Giants to fall to 8–7–1 and miss the playoffs — was plunged into chaos again. And it wasn't just the McCloughan firing, which left the Redskins in the awkward position of going into the draft without a GM. It was also the lingering uncertainty over the future of quarterback Kirk Cousins, the departure of both coordinators and the enduring lack of public accountability by the team's ownership and upper management.

With no GM as the calendar turned to May, and with Cousins likely to depart after this season, the biggest source of stability in Washington by far these days is head coach Jay Gruden, now entering his fourth year in D.C. and signed to a two-year extension in March. It is a testament to his leadership in the face of all this dysfunction that the Redskins actually have a chance to be a better team in 2017.

OFFENSE Despite the gaudy numbers the offense produced in 2016 — when the Redskins ranked third in the NFL in total yards and second in passing yards — there will still be major changes this season, among them a new coordinator (Matt Cavanaugh, promoted from quarterbacks coach), a new primary play caller (Gruden himself), a new quarterbacks coach (newly hired Kevin O'Connell) and a rebuilt wide receiver corps, with Pierre Garçon and DeSean Jackson (who combined for 2,046 receiving yards last season) now gone, and Terrelle Pryor on board as the top playmaker. Pryor was an early target for the Redskins, who are desperate to improve their ugly red zone numbers from a year ago. A former standout QB in college, Pryor has completed his transformation to receiver. Last season, he caught 77 passes for 1,007 yards as the top target in Cleveland.

For a long time, it appeared Cousins, coming off a Pro Bowl season, could join the Redskins' exodus, but after entertaining options ranging from a lengthy contract extension to a blockbuster trade, the team settled on the middle ground of franchise-tagging him for the second year, at a cost of $24 million. Cousins, a fourth-round pick in 2012, has started 16 games in each of the last two seasons. Last year, he threw for 4,917 yards with 25 touchdowns and 12 interceptions while completing 67.0 percent of his attempts.

If this is Cousins' last shot at winning big in D.C., he will at least be surrounded by solid pieces, including the electrifying Pryor at wide receiver; Jordan Reed and Vernon Davis at tight end; a running back corps that includes incumbent starter Rob Kelley, fourth-round pick Samaje Perine and third-down back Chris Thompson; and an offensive line that returns all five starters from a unit that helped produce the third-most total yards and fourth-fewest sacks in the NFL last year.

DEFENSE A year ago, the Redskins focused on offense at the expense of defense in the 2016 draft, and it wound up costing them dearly, as the failure to make the playoffs is largely the fault of a unit that gave up 377.9 yards per game, fifth most in the NFL. In the aftermath, coordinator Joe Barry and two of his assistants lost their jobs and the Redskins went heavy on defenders in the 2017 draft, selecting a lineman (Alabama's Jonathan Allen), a linebacker (Alabama's Ryan Anderson) and a cornerback (UCLA's Fabian Moreau) with their first three picks.

In particular, Allen and Anderson — the former a much-needed in-the-trenches presence, the latter a promising edge rusher — have a chance to make an immediate impact

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER: Daniel Snyder
PRESIDENT: Bruce Allen
VP OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION: Eric Schaffer
DIRECTOR OF PRO PERSONNEL: Alex Santos
STADIUM: FedEx Field (82,000)
SURFACE: Latitude 36 Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.redskins.com
TICKETS: 1-301-276-6050
TRAINING CAMP: Bon Secours Washington Redskins Training Center (Richmond, Va.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Jay Gruden
RECORD WITH TEAM: 21–26–1
CAREER RECORD: 21–26–1
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Matt Cavanaugh
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Greg Manusky
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Ben Kotwica
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/OFFENSIVE LINE: Bill Callahan
QUARTERBACKS: Kevin O'Connell
RUNNING BACKS: Randy Jordan
WIDE RECEIVERS: Ike Hilliard
TIGHT ENDS: Wes Phillips
DEFENSIVE LINE: Jim Tomsula
INSIDE LINEBACKERS: Kirk Olivadotti
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS: Chad Grimm
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Torrian Gray

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE / 2016 NFL RANKINGS

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Sept. 17	at L.A. Rams	4:25	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Sept. 24	Oakland	8:30	12-4	373.3 (6)	375.1 (26)	26.0 (7)	24.1 (20)
Oct. 2	at Kansas City (Mon.)	8:30	12-4	343.0 (20)	368.5 (24)	24.3 (13)	19.4 (7)
BYE							
Oct. 15	San Francisco	1:00	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Oct. 23	at Philadelphia (Mon.)	8:30	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Oct. 29	Dallas	4:25	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Nov. 5	at Seattle	4:05	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Nov. 12	Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Nov. 19	at New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Nov. 23	N.Y. Giants (Thu.)	8:30	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Nov. 30	at Dallas (Thu.)	8:25	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Dec. 10	at L.A. Chargers	4:05	5-11	356.8 (14)	347.1 (16)	25.6 (9)	26.4 (29)
Dec. 17	Arizona	1:00	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Dec. 24	Denver	1:00	9-7	323.1 (27)	316.1 (4)	20.8 (22)	18.6 (4)
Dec. 31	at N.Y. Giants	1:00	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)

QB KIRK COUSINS

2016 RESULTS (8-7-1)

Sept. 12	Pittsburgh	L	16-38
Sept. 18	Dallas	L	23-27
Sept. 25	at N.Y. Giants	W	29-27
Oct. 2	Cleveland	W	31-20
Oct. 9	at Baltimore	W	16-10
Oct. 16	Philadelphia	W	27-20
Oct. 23	at Detroit	L	17-20
Oct. 30	at Cincinnati (ot)	T	27-27
Nov. 13	Minnesota	W	26-20
Nov. 20	Green Bay	W	42-24
Nov. 24	at Dallas	L	26-31
Dec. 4	at Arizona	L	23-31
Dec. 11	at Philadelphia	W	27-22
Dec. 19	Carolina	L	15-26
Dec. 24	at Chicago	W	41-21
Jan. 1	N.Y. Giants	L	10-19

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

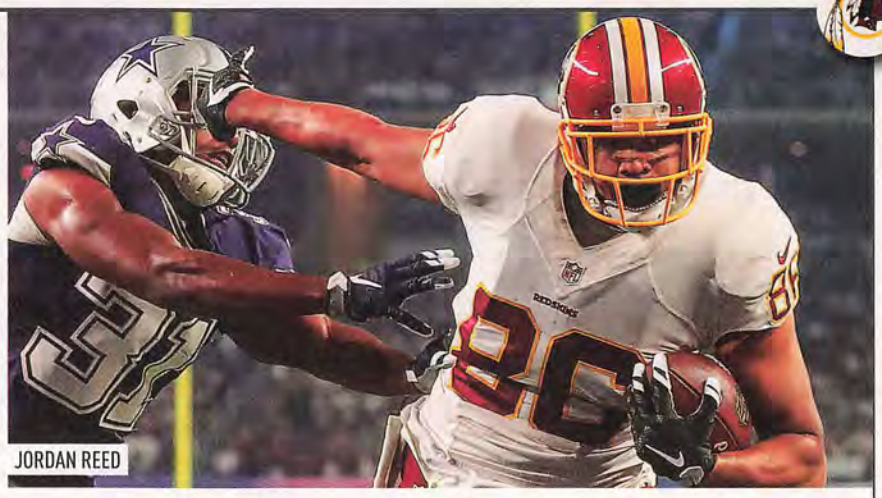
PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Kirk Cousins	606	406	4,917	25	12
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Rob Kelley	168	704	4.2	6	
Matt Jones	99	460	4.6	3	
Chris Thompson	68	356	5.2	3	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Pierre Garçon	79	1,041	13.2	3	
Jamison Crowder	67	847	12.6	7	
Jordan Reed	66	686	10.4	6	
DeSean Jackson	56	1,005	17.9	4	
Chris Thompson	49	349	7.1	2	
Vernon Davis	44	583	13.3	2	

KICKING: Dustin Hopkins, 34-42 FGs, 36-39 PAT, 138 points
TACKLES: Mason Foster, 124; Will Compton, 106
SACKS: Ryan Kerrigan, 11.0; Trent Murphy, 9.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Josh Norman, 3; Bashaud Breeland, 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	403.4	3	3
Rushing	106.0	21	10
Passing	297.4	2	2
Scoring	24.8	12	6
Third Down %	45.2	5	3
Punt Returns	11.9	4	3
Kick Returns	21.1	20	10

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	377.9	28	15
Rushing	119.8	24	14
Passing	258.1	25	11
Scoring	23.9	19	9
Interceptions	13	T15	8
Sacks	38	T9	T6
Turnover Differential	0	T17	T8


JORDAN REED

at their positions under defensive coordinator Greg Manusky's scheme. (Moreau, who tore a pectoral muscle at UCLA's pro day and spent the rest of the spring rehabbing, may not be ready by the Redskins' offseason workouts.)

But the overhaul of the defense actually began well before the draft, with the free-agent additions of ends Terrell McClain and Stacy McGee — the latter of whom could be shifted to nose tackle, a position he played in Oakland, following the addition of top draftee Allen — and linebacker Zach Brown, a Pro Bowl performer for Buffalo in 2016.

With top pass rusher Ryan Kerrigan (58.5 career sacks, including 11 last year) returning, and veteran cornerback Josh Norman back for a second season in D.C., the pass defense is anchored by proven performers. But at the other corner, Bashaud Breeland had an inconsistent 2016, and there could be an opportunity for Moreau, provided he's healthy, to have an early impact in nickel coverage, if not more.

It also wouldn't be a Redskins offseason without a player getting hit with a four-game drug suspension; this time, the perpetrator was pass rusher Trent Murphy, who had nine sacks last year and whose absence will force some tough decisions in the early portion of the Redskins' schedule.

SPECIALISTS Placekicker Dustin Hopkins has converted 84 percent of his field goal attempts and 95 percent of his extra points in two seasons in Washington, and he routinely buries his kickoffs in the end zone. But some critical misses, including a potential game-winner against Cincinnati, made the Redskins entertain thoughts of a change. If anything, however, the franchise has been guilty in the past of giving up on kickers too quickly (Graham Gano and Shaun Suisham come to mind), so while he will probably get some competition in training camp, the guess here is that Hopkins will be back in 2017. Punter Tress Way, too, appears safe for a fourth season in D.C., even though his yards-per-punt average has declined in each of the past two seasons. The long snapper will be eighth-year pro Nick Sundberg, who signed a four-year extension in January.

As for kick returns, expect Jamison Crowder — whose 85-yard touchdown return against Baltimore provided a win in Week 5 — to be back deep fielding punts again, and Thompson to reprise his role as primary kick returner. Among the new influx of draft picks, safeties Montae Nicholson (fourth round) and Josh Harvey-Clemons (seventh round) are expected to be immediate contributors on special teams.

Complaining about the special teams is a time-honored tradition among Redskins fans, but this group, altogether, is one of the franchise's most solid in recent memory.

FINAL ANALYSIS In the weeks leading up to the draft, as the team was firing its GM and turning its negotiation with Cousins into a daily circus, the Redskins looked like a franchise on the verge of a significant, multi-year regression. But then all of a sudden, a bout of sensibility overcame the team's top management. The personnel chiefs were set free to make a slew of smart moves, leading up to and including the draft, where — largely relying on a draft board left behind by McCloughan — they gambled somewhat by using premium picks on players with injury concerns, including Allen and Moreau.

Plenty can still go wrong, and the ongoing speculation over Cousins' future status will dominate the discourse all summer. But for 2017, at least, Cousins appears well-armed with intriguing targets — with Pryor, in particular, representing the type of big, explosive wideout the likes of which Cousins has never had in Washington.

Given all that has gone on since the bitter end of the 2016 season, it seems amazing to say this — but at least on paper, the Redskins appear to be a better team than the one that went 8–7–1 and narrowly missed the playoffs a year ago.

Cousins: AP;

2017 VETERAN REDSKINS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
8 Cousins, Kirk	QB	6-3	210	5	Michigan State	D4a-12	D4a-Was-12
16 McCoy, Colt	QB	6-1	215	7	Texas	FA-SF-14	D3a-Cle-10
2 Sudfeld, Nate	QB	6-6	235	1	Indiana	D6-16	D6-Was-16
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
34 Brown, Mack	RB	5-11	215	1	Florida	FA-15	FA-Hou-15
31 Jones, Matt	RB	6-2	232	2	Florida	D3-15	D3-Was-15
20 Kelley, Rob	RB	6-0	228	1	Tulane	FA-16	FA-Was-16
39 Marshall, Keith	RB	5-11	222	1	Georgia	D7b-16	D7b-Was-16
25 Thompson, Chris	RB	5-8	195	3	Florida State	D5a-13	D5a-Was-13
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
89 Carrier, Derek	TE	6-4	248	4	Beloit	T-SF-15	FA-Oak-12
80 Crowder, Jamison	WR	5-8	182	2	Duke	D4a-15	D4a-Was-15
85 Davis, Vernon	TE	6-3	248	11	Maryland	FA-Den-16	D1a-SF-06
17 Diggs, Reggie	WR	6-4	215	1	Richmond	FA-16	FA-Was-16
18 Doctson, Josh	WR	6-2	206	1	TCU	D1-16	D1-Was-16
14 Grant, Ryan	WR	6-0	201	3	Tulane	D5-14	D5-Was-14
13 Harris, Maurice	WR	6-3	200	1	California	FA-16	FA-Was-16
15 Hazel, Matt	WR	6-1	204	2	Coastal Carolina	FA-16	D6-Mia-14
84 Paul, Niles	TE	6-1	242	6	Nebraska	D5b-11	D5b-Was-11
11 Pryor, Terrelle	WR	6-4	223	4	Ohio State	FA-Cle-17	SD3-Oak-11
83 Quick, Brian	WR	6-3	218	5	Appalachian State	FA-LAR-17	D2a-LA-12
86 Reed, Jordan	TE	6-2	246	4	Florida	D3-13	D3-Was-13
83 Saxton, Wes	TE	6-4	235	1	South Alabama	FA-16	FA-NYJ-15
10 Thompson, Kendal	WR	6-2	192	1	Utah	FA-16	FA-Was-16
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
72 Bowen, Kevin	T	6-9	335	1	East Central	FA-16	FA-Was-16
74 Kouandjio, Arie	G	6-5	325	2	Alabama	D4b-15	D4b-Was-15
77 Lauvao, Shawn	G	6-3	326	7	Arizona State	FA-Cle-14	D3b-Cle-10
61 Long, Spencer	C/G	6-5	324	3	Nebraska	D3b-14	D3b-Was-14
76 Moses, Morgan	T	6-6	335	3	Virginia	D3a-14	D3a-Was-14
79 Nsekhe, Ty	T	6-8	335	2	Texas State	FA-15	FA-Ind-12
60 Painter, Vinston	OL	6-4	322	2	Virginia Tech	W-Mia-16	D6-Den-13
62 Patrick, Ronald	OL	6-1	310	1	South Carolina	FA-16	FA-Dal-14
75 Scherff, Brandon	G	6-5	323	2	Iowa	D1-15	D1-Was-15
63 Williams, Isaiah	T	6-3	295	1	Akron	FA-16	FA-Was-16
71 Williams, Trent	T	6-5	320	7	Oklahoma	D1-10	D1-Was-10
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
69 Francis, A.J.	DL	6-5	330	3	Maryland	FA-16	FA-Mia-13
90 Hood, Ziggy	DL	6-3	305	8	Missouri	FA-16	D1-Pit-09
98 Ioannidis, Matt	DE	6-3	308	1	Temple	D5-16	D5-Was-16
72 Lanier II, Anthony	DE	6-6	282	1	Alabama A&M	FA-16	FA-Was-16
95 Mbu, Joey	DL	6-3	310	2	Houston	FA-16	FA-Atl-15
92 McGee, Stacy	DT	6-3	310	4	Oklahoma	FA-Oak-17	D6d-Oak-13
97 McClain, Terrell	DE	6-2	302	6	South Florida	FA-Dal-17	D3-Car-11
99 Taylor, Phil	DL	6-3	335	4	Baylor	FA-17	D1-Cle-11
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
96 Bates, Houston	LB	6-3	252	2	Louisiana Tech	FA-15	FA-Was-15
56 Brown, Zach	LB	6-1	248	5	North Carolina	FA-Buf-17	D2-Ten-12
55 Carter, Chris	LB	6-1	245	6	Fresno State	FA-Ind-17	D5-Pit-11
51 Compton, Will	LB	6-1	238	3	Nebraska	FA-13	FA-Was-13
53 Daniels, Steven	LB	5-11	245	1	Boston College	D7a-16	D7a-Was-16
46 Fortt, Khairi	LB	6-2	240	1	California	FA-17	D4-NO-14
54 Foster, Mason	LB	6-1	250	6	Washington	FA-15	D3-TB-11
58 Galette, Junior	LB	6-2	260	7	Stillman	FA-15	FA-NO-10
91 Kerrigan, Ryan	LB	6-4	265	6	Purdue	D1-11	D1-Was-11
93 Murphy, Trent	LB	6-5	290	3	Stanford	D2-14	D2-Was-14
45 Robertson, Pete	LB	6-2	233	1	Texas Tech	FA-17	FA-Sea-16
94 Smith, Preston	LB	6-5	268	2	Mississippi State	D2-15	D2-Was-15
50 Spaight, Martrell	LB	6-0	238	2	Arkansas	D5-15	D5-Was-15
48 Trail, Lynden	LB	6-7	270	1	Norfolk State	FA-15	FA-Hou-15
59 Vigil, Zach	LB	6-2	240	2	Utah State	W-Mia-16	FA-Mia-15
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
41 Blackmon, Will	S	6-0	212	10	Boston College	FA-15	D4-GB-06
26 Breeland, Bashaud	CB	5-11	200	3	Clemson	D4-14	D4-Was-14
30 Cravens, Su'a	S	6-1	222	1	USC	D2-16	D2-Was-16
47 Dunbar, Quinton	CB	6-2	203	2	Florida	FA-15	FA-Was-15
22 Everett, Deshazor	S	6-0	198	2	Texas A&M	FA-15	FA-TB-15
38 Fuller, Kendall	CB	5-11	196	1	Virginia Tech	D3-16	D3-Was-16
23 Hall, DeAngelo	S	5-10	202	13	Virginia Tech	FA-08	D1-Atl-04
24 Norman, Josh	CB	6-0	200	5	Coastal Carolina	FA-Car-16	D5-Car-12
35 Phillips, Dashaun	CB	5-11	190	2	Tarleton State	FA-15	FA-Dal-14
46 Randolph, Shak	DB	6-3	213	1	SMU	FA-16	FA-KC-16
37 Simon, Tharold	CB	6-3	202	4	LSU	FA-17	D5-Sea-13
36 Swearinger, D.J.	S	5-10	205	4	South Carolina	FA-15	D2-Hou-13
32 Wolff, Earl	S	5-11	210	2	NC State	FA-17	D5-Phi-13
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
3 Hopkins, Dustin	K	6-2	206	3	Florida State	FA-15	D6-Buf-13
57 Sundberg, Nick	LS	6-0	245	7	California	FA-10	FA-Car-09
5 Way, Tress	P	6-1	225	3	Oklahoma	W-Chi-14	FA-Chi-13

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	11	Terrelle Pryor	83	Brian Quick
WR	80	Jamison Crowder	14	Ryan Grant
WR	18	Josh Doctson	10	Kendal Thompson
LT	71	Trent Williams	79	Ty Nsekhe
LG	77	Shawn Lauvao	63	Isaiah Williams
C	61	Spencer Long	62	Ronald Patrick
RG	75	Brandon Scherff	74	Arie Kouandjio
RT	76	Morgan Moses	60	Vinston Painter
TE	86	Jordan Reed	85	Vernon Davis
QB	8	Kirk Cousins	12	Colt McCoy
RB	20	Rob Kelley	25	Chris Thompson

DEFENSE

DE	97	Terrell McClain	98	Matt Ioannidis
NT	92	Stacy McGee	90	Ziggy Hood
DE	95	Jonathan Allen (R)	72	Anthony Lanier
OLB	91	Ryan Kerrigan		Ryan Anderson (R)
ILB	56	Zach Brown	51	Will Compton
ILB	54	Mason Foster	55	Chris Carter
OLB	94	Preston Smith	93	Trent Murphy
CB	24	Josh Norman	47	Quinton Dunbar
CB	26	Bashaud Breeland		Fabian Moreau (R)
FS	36	D.J. Swearinger	23	DeAngelo Hall
SS	30	Su'a Cravens	32	Earl Wolff

SPECIALISTS

K	3	Dustin Hopkins	KR	25	Chris Thompson
P	5	Tress Way	PR	80	Jamison Crowder

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
LB	Zach Brown	Buffalo
LB	Chris Carter	Indianapolis
DE	Terrell McClain	Dallas
DL	Stacy McGee	Oakland
WR	Terrelle Pryor	Cleveland
WR	Brian Quick	L.A. Rams
S	D.J. Swearinger	Arizona

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
DT	Chris Baker	Tampa Bay
WR	Pierre Garçon	San Francisco
WR	DeSean Jackson	Tampa Bay
DT	Ricky Jean Francois	Green Bay

SCOUTING THE REDSKINS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP WASHINGTON "It looked like the Redskins finally had stability at head coach, general manager and quarterback. Then the calendar turned to 2017 and questions abound again after GM Scot McCloughan was dismissed in February. In addition, the Kirk Cousins scenario has led to him having all the leverage on the club with more than $40 million in guarantees over a two-year period of time and the threat of his departure after the season looming over the team. ... They allowed DeSean Jackson and Pierre Garçon to depart in free agency with hopes that former first-round pick Josh Doctson and newly signed Terrelle Pryor, along with the highly productive Jamison Crowder, can get it done. Doctson is unproven, and Pryor has some physical traits but has never been in a disciplined, timing-based West Coast offense. ... The offensive line is adequate in this scheme. Left tackle Trent Williams still plays at a high level. ... Running back Rob Kelley was discovered as an undrafted free agent from Tulane. In conjunction with rookie Samaje Perine and incumbent Chris Thompson, they will form the nucleus of the Redskins' backfield. ... Tight end Jordan Reed has tremendous pass-catching talent but has had trouble staying healthy on a consistent basis. ... Washington attempted to build their depth along the defensive front by signing Terrell McClain (Cowboys) and Stacy McGee (Raiders) in free agency, then they received a draft-day gift when Alabama's Jonathan Allen fell to them at No. 17. ... On third down, they finished 32nd in the league in giving up a 46.6 percent conversion rate. ... The constant Cousins talk will take its toll, so I see them taking a step back in 2017."

Allen: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Norman: Rob Leiter via Getty Images

REDSKINS IN THE *DRAFT* B+

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Jonathan Allen	DT	6-3	286	Alabama
2.	Ryan Anderson	OLB	6-2	253	Alabama
3.	Fabian Moreau	CB	6-1	206	UCLA
4.	Samaje Perine	RB	5-11	233	Oklahoma
4.	Montae Nicholson	S	6-2	212	Michigan State
5.	Jeremy Sprinkle	TE	6-5	252	Arkansas
6.	Chase Roullier	C	6-4	312	Wyoming
6.	Robert Davis	WR	6-3	219	Georgia State
7.	Josh Harvey-Clemons	S	6-4	217	Louisville
7.	Josh Holsey	DB	5-10	190	Auburn

Loaded with extra picks, the Redskins wisely focused on defense at this year's draft, with Jonathan Allen, a versatile lineman, and Ryan Anderson, a promising edge rusher, both expected to make immediate impacts on that side of the ball. The fact they were teammates with the Crimson Tide is more of a curiosity and a coincidence than any sort of strategy. Fabian Moreau could contribute in the defensive backfield as well, if he recovers from a torn pectoral muscle in time for training camp. Samaje Perine, Oklahoma's all-time leading rusher, could battle Rob Kelley for the starting running back job, but he should get plentiful playing time regardless. The Redskins beefed up their secondary in the later rounds, adding two safeties (Montae Nicholson and Josh Harvey-Clemons) and one corner (Josh Holsey). Tight end Jeremy Sprinkle was productive at Arkansas but ran into some legal trouble at the team's bowl game. In all, this was a draft class that rated highly among most draft experts.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

FAREWELL TOUR? The Redskins have until July 15 to sign Kirk Cousins to a long-term contract, but there was little to no momentum toward any such deal by late spring, and the chances appear strong this will be his final year in D.C., since placing the franchise tag on him for a third straight year in 2018 would be financially prohibitive.

FUTURE HOME? Two of Cousins' former offensive coordinators are now the head coaches of other teams — Kyle Shanahan (49ers) and Sean McVay (Rams). And their enduring fondness for Cousins is one reason trade speculation over him has persisted deep into the 2017 offseason — as is the fact that neither the 49ers nor the Rams has an established quarterback in place. If Cousins eventually leaves Washington, those two teams would likely be at the front of the line of teams trying to acquire him.

QB OF THE FUTURE Where would the Redskins go at quarterback should Cousins leave? Veteran backup Colt McCoy, a 30-year-old whom the team re-signed to a three-year deal in 2016, would be a perfect one- or two-year bridge to give the Redskins time to develop their next young starter. Since they didn't draft a quarterback this year, that could mean they view their future QB to be Nate Sudfeld, a 6'6" specimen whom the team drafted in the sixth round in 2016 and who served as the third-stringer last year but never appeared in a game.

CHANNELING SEAN TAYLOR Reserve linebacker Khairi Fortt will have a starring role this year in at least one respect. The Discovery Channel tabbed him to portray former Redskins safety Sean Taylor in a scripted documentary about Taylor's murder in 2007. Fortt's father, Guy, is an accomplished actor and will be playing Taylor's father in the show, called "The Perfect Murder," which was scheduled to air beginning in June.

PASS THE TURKEY The Redskins' 2017 schedule has one interesting and historic twist: The team will host a game on Thanksgiving for the first time, when the New York Giants visit on Nov. 23 for a night game. The Redskins have played a Thanksgiving Day game nine other times (going an unsightly 2–7), but never at home.

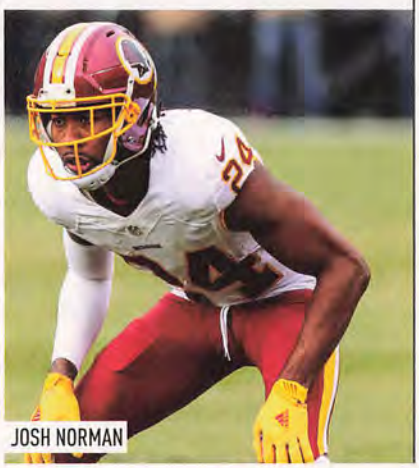
RED-ZONE HELP The Redskins quite clearly placed a premium on height when revamping their wide receiver corps this offseason. Gone is playmaker DeSean Jackson, the 5'10" speedster. In his place is Terrelle Pryor, who stands a good half-foot taller. Pryor has played only one season as a wide receiver but caught 77 passes for 1,007 yards from six different quarterbacks in Cleveland in 2016. The team also added 6'4" receiver Brian Quick in free agency and 6'3" receiver Robert Davis in the sixth round of the draft. The Redskins hope the extra height will be a boon for a red-zone offense that ranked 30th in the NFL in 2016, scoring touchdowns on only 45.9 percent of red-zone possessions.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

3.9 The Redskins ranked third in Adjusted Sack Rate, allowing only 3.9 percent of their pass snaps to become sacks.

9.1 The Redskins allowed a league-high 9.1 receptions and 77.0 yards per game to tight ends.

12.8 The Redskins' offense led the league in broken tackles, creating them on 12.8 percent of offensive snaps.



JOSH NORMAN

CHICAGO BEARS

NFC NORTH FORECAST

4

An optimist would say there's nowhere to go but up for a Bears team that limped home with a 3–13 record in 2016, the worst 16-game mark in franchise history.

A realist would say that this year's Bears team isn't any better on paper and that John Fox and his staff will be coaching for their jobs in 2017. Maybe that's where the improvement will come from, because it's debatable whether the personnel is any better. That's especially true after a draft that left observers scratching their heads and wondering how general manager Ryan Pace could provide so little immediate help for a team that is so much in need of it. The Bears were extremely active in free agency and improved their depth. But a team with a dearth of impact players didn't add any and lost its best offensive weapon in wide receiver Alshon Jeffery.

OFFENSE After eight years of teasing with rare flashes of talent but always underachieving, Jay Cutler is gone. Mike Glennon is the successor. But Glennon is in a win-now-or-else situation, because the Bears used the second overall pick in the draft on Mitch Trubisky, who Pace hopes will become the team's franchise quarterback. If Trubisky doesn't deliver, Pace will soon follow Cutler out of town. Glennon got a three-year $45 million deal, but after the $16 million he's guaranteed this year, just $2.5 million more is guaranteed. The hope is that by 2018, Trubisky will be ready to replace Glennon, or that Glennon plays well enough to keep the rookie on the bench for another year of seasoning.

The 6'6" Glennon's career passer rating of 84.6 indicates competency, especially since most of his playing time came as a rookie in 2013 when he started 13 games for a bad Tampa Bay team. But Glennon has thrown just 11 passes since the end of the 2014 season, after which the Bucs' quarterback job went to Jameis Winston. Glennon lacks both the mobility that Cutler often needed to survive and Cutler's rocket arm, but he can spin it and is considered a quick study with some upside. Mark Sanchez was signed to replace last year's backups Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley, who both landed in San Francisco.

To replace Jeffery, the Bears added free-agent wide receivers Markus Wheaton and Kendall Wright, both of whom fit best as slot receivers and are young enough to duplicate promising seasons they enjoyed earlier in their careers. They also add some much-needed speed to complement 6'3" Cam Meredith, an undrafted free agent in 2015 who had a breakout sophomore season in 2016 with 66 receptions for 888 yards.

The X-factor in the Bears' passing game is wide receiver Kevin White, the seventh overall pick in the 2015 draft. The 6'3" White runs a 4.35 40 but missed his entire rookie season with shin splints that required surgery. In the first four games last season, White was just beginning to tap into his massive potential when a fractured left fibula and high ankle sprain ended his season.

Tight end should be much improved with the return of talented pass catcher Zach Miller and the addition of ascending, three-down player Dion Sims in free agency. The Bears also used a second-round pick on 6'6", 277-pound Adam Shaheen, who could also contribute on all three downs provided he can make the jump from Division-II Ashland.

The run game is in excellent hands. Jordan Howard may have been the biggest steal of the 2016 draft after Cowboys quarterback Dak Prescott. The fifth-round choice from Indiana rushed for a Bears rookie-record 1,313 yards and had a higher average per carry (5.2 yards) than Ezekiel Elliott.

There is plenty of depth here, including former fourth-round picks Jeremy Langford (2015) and Ka'Deem Carey (2014), plus free-agent pickup Benny Cunningham, along with this year's fourth-rounder, Tarik Cohen.

The interior of the O-line, including four-time Pro Bowl left guard Josh Sitton and center Cody Whitehair, will be a team strength — if right guard Kyle Long, a

THE ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN: George H. McCaskey
PRESIDENT/CEO: Ted Phillips
GENERAL MANAGER: Ryan Pace
DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Josh Lucas
STADIUM: Soldier Field (61,500)
SURFACE: Kentucky Bluegrass
WEBSITE: www.chicagobears.com
TICKETS: 1-847-615-BEAR (2327)
TRAINING CAMP: Olivet Nazarene University (Bourbonnais, Ill.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: John Fox
RECORD WITH TEAM: 9–23
CAREER RECORD: 128–112
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Dowell Loggains
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Vic Fangio
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Jeff Rodgers
QUARTERBACKS: Dave Ragone
RUNNING BACKS: Curtis Modkins
WIDE RECEIVERS: Zach Azzanni
TIGHT ENDS: Frank Smith
OFFENSIVE LINE: Jeremiah Washburn
DEFENSIVE LINE: Jay Rodgers
LINEBACKERS: Glenn Pires
OUTSIDE LINEBACKERS: Brandon Staley
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Ed Donatell

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE / 2016 NFL RANKINGS

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Sept. 17	at Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Sept. 24	Pittsburgh	1:00	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Sept. 28	at Green Bay (Thu.)	8:25	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Oct. 9	Minnesota (Mon.)	8:30	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Oct. 15	at Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Oct. 22	Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Oct. 29	at New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
BYE							
Nov. 12	Green Bay	1:00	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Nov. 19	Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Nov. 26	at Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Dec. 3	San Francisco	1:00	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Dec. 10	at Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Dec. 16	at Detroit (Sat.)	4:30	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Dec. 24	Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Dec. 31	at Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)

Mark LoMoglio/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images

RB JORDAN HOWARD

2016 RESULTS (3-13)

Sept. 11	at Houston	L	14-23
Sept. 19	Philadelphia	L	14-29
Sept. 25	at Dallas	L	17-31
Oct. 2	Detroit	W	17-14
Oct. 9	at Indianapolis	L	23-29
Oct. 16	Jacksonville	L	16-17
Oct. 20	at Green Bay	L	10-26
Oct. 31	Minnesota	W	20-10
Nov. 13	at Tampa Bay	L	10-36
Nov. 20	at N.Y. Giants	L	16-22
Nov. 27	Tennessee	L	21-27
Dec. 4	San Francisco	W	26-6
Dec. 11	at Detroit	L	17-20
Dec. 18	Green Bay	L	27-30
Dec. 24	Washington	L	21-41
Jan. 1	at Minnesota	L	10-38

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Matt Barkley	216	129	1,611	8	14
Brian Hoyer	200	134	1,445	6	0
Jay Cutler	137	81	1,059	4	5
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Jordan Howard	252	1,313	5.2	6	
Jeremy Langford	62	200	3.2	4	
Ka'Deem Carey	32	126	3.9	0	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Cameron Meredith	66	888	13.5	4	
Alshon Jeffery	52	821	15.8	2	
Zach Miller	47	486	10.3	4	
Eddie Royal	33	369	11.2	2	
Jordan Howard	29	298	10.3	1	

KICKING: Connor Barth, 18-23 FGs, 31-32 PAT, 85 points
TACKLES: Jerrell Freeman, 110; Harold Jones-Quartey, 78
SACKS: Willie Young, 7.5; Two players tied with 7.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Tracy Porter, 2; Cre'von LeBlanc, 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	356.5	15	8
Rushing	108.4	17	7
Passing	248.1	14	8
Scoring	17.4	T28	15
Third Down %	37.8	21	12
Punt Returns	8.0	19	11
Kick Returns	21.4	18	9

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	346.8	18	8
Rushing	121.9	27	15
Passing	224.9	7	3
Scoring	24.9	24	12
Interceptions	8	T29	16
Sacks	37	12	8
Turnover Differential	-20	T31	16

LEONARD FLOYD

Tom Lynn

three-time Pro Bowler, returns to form after missing half the 2016 season with shoulder and ankle injuries. Whitehair was a tackle at Kansas State who never played center until he got to the NFL, but he made a seamless transition. The tackles, Charles Leno on the left and Bobby Massie on the right, are not as talented but are more than adequate.

DEFENSE Coordinator Vic Fangio would be thrilled with a repeat performance from Akiem Hicks, who was probably the Bears' defensive MVP in his first season with the team. Known as a stout run defender, the 6'5", 336-pound Hicks also added a career-best seven sacks and played an amazing 86.5 percent of the defensive snaps. For the Bears to make progress up front this season, they need more than the five starts they got last year from 2015 second-round nose tackle Eddie Goldman, who is a solid D-line anchor when healthy. As a rookie, Goldman was a force against the inside run, and he also has the ability to push the pocket. Massive John Jenkins (6'3", 359 pounds) was added in free agency to provide another run-stuffing widebody. More is expected from end Jonathan Bullard, a disappointing 2016 third-round pick.

The Bears acquired the upgrades they needed at inside linebacker last year in free agency in veterans Danny Trevathan and Jerrell Freeman. Both played well when they were in the lineup, especially vs. the run, but Freeman was suspended for four games because of a positive PED test. Trevathan missed seven games and finished on IR with a ruptured right patellar tendon, and he could start the season on the PUP list. Last year's fourth-round pick, Nick Kwiatkoski, got some valuable starting experience filling in when the two veterans were out, but he needs to take another big step to become an effective starter.

Outside linebacker Leonard Floyd overcame multiple nagging injuries as a rookie to tie Hicks for second on the team with seven sacks. A healthy Floyd, with the benefit of a little more time in the weight room, should be an impact pass rusher. Because of knee injuries, Pernell McPhee may never be the player and pass rusher the Bears thought they were getting prior to the 2015 season. With 10 sacks in two years, he hasn't lived up to his $38.75 million, five-year contract, but he brings an emotional spark when he's on the field and is still just 28. Unsung Willie Young has 24 sacks in his three seasons in Chicago, and he led the team with 7.5 last season, although six came in the first six games.

The secondary has been remade after it was the prime culprit in a second straight season with only eight interceptions. Last year's top cover corner, Tracy Porter, was cut. Veteran corners Prince Amukamara and Marcus Cooper were added in free agency, as was safety Quintin Demps, who is coming off a six-pick campaign with the Texans. But Amukamara is on a one-year deal, and Demps turns 32 in the summer. Fourth-round safety Eddie Jackson was the only defensive player the Bears drafted, and he could emerge as a Day 1 starter.

SPECIALISTS After 11 years, during which he became the ninth-most-accurate field goal kicker in NFL history (85.4 percent), Robbie Gould was abruptly cut and replaced by Connor Barth, who converted 78.3 percent of his field goal tries. Gould was 10-for-10 after he was picked up by the Giants, but he missed three extra points. Punter Pat O'Donnell and the punt-coverage unit both have room for improvement, as does the return game. But Cunningham is an upgrade on kickoff returns, and Jackson was exceptional last year as Alabama's punt returner.

FINAL ANALYSIS Fox had a strong track record of guiding his previous teams — the Panthers and Broncos — to monumental growth in Year 2 under his command. But last year's Bears team plummeted from 6–10 to 3–13. There are whispers that the relationship between Fox and Pace is fraying, and with a difficult early schedule, this operation could unravel in a hurry.

2017 VETERAN BEARS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
8 Glennon, Mike	QB	6-6	225	4	NC State	D3-13	D3-TB-13
6 Sanchez, Mark	QB	6-2	225	8	USC	FA-Dal-17	D1-NYJ-09
9 Shaw, Connor	QB	6-1	210	2	South Carolina	W-Cle-16	FA-Cle-14
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
Carey, Ka'Deem	RB	5-10	215	3	Arizona	D4a-14	D4a-Chi-14
26 Cunningham, Benny	RB	5-10	217	4	Middle Tennessee	FA-LAR-17	FA-LAR-13
24 Howard, Jordan	RB	6-0	222	1	Indiana	D5-16	D5-Chi-16
33 Langford, Jeremy	RB	6-0	211	2	Michigan State	D4-15	D4-Chi-15
47 Lasike, Paul	FB	5-11	258	2	BYU	FA-15	FA-Ari-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
11 Bellamy, Joshua	WR	6-0	211	2	Louisville	W-Was-14	FA-KC-12
84 Braunecker, Ben	TE	6-4	255	1	Harvard	FA-16	FA-Chi-16
83 Braverman, Daniel	WR	5-10	185	1	Western Michigan	D7-16	D7-Chi-16
85 Brown, Daniel	TE	6-5	243	2	James Madison	W-Bal-16	FA-Bal-15
81 Meredith, Cameron	WR	6-3	207	2	Illinois State	FA-15	FA-Chi-15
86 Miller, Zach	TE	6-5	243	7	Nebraska-Omaha	FA-13	D6-Jac-09
80 Pruitt, MyCole	TE	6-2	258	2	Southern Illinois	FA-16	D5-Min-15
82 Randle, Rueben	WR	6-2	208	4	LSU	FA-17	D2-NYG-12
19 Royal, Eddie	WR	5-10	190	9	Virginia Tech	FA-LAC-15	D2-Den-08
88 Sims, Dion	TE	6-4	271	4	Michigan State	FA-Mia-17	D4b-Mia-13
14 Thompson, Deonte	WR	6-0	205	4	Florida	FA-15	FA-Bal-12
12 Wheaton, Markus	WR	5-11	182	4	Oregon State	FA-Pit-17	D3-Pit-13
13 White, Kevin	WR	6-3	216	2	West Virginia	D1-15	D1-Chi-15
Wright, Kendall	WR	5-10	191	5	Baylor	FA-Ten-17	D1-Ten-12
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
57 Boggs, Taylor	OL	6-3	302	4	Humboldt State	FA-17	FA-NYJ-11
76 Compton, Tom	OL	6-5	308	4	South Dakota	FA-Atl-17	D6-Was-12
60 Edison, Cornelius	OL	6-3	309	2	Portland State	FA-15	FA-Chi-15
55 Grasu, Hroniss	OL	6-3	303	2	Oregon	D3-15	D3-Chi-15
64 Kush, Eric	OL	6-4	313	3	California (PA)	W-LAR-16	D7-KC-13
72 Leno, Jr., Charles	OL	6-3	305	3	Boise State	D7-14	D7-Chi-14
75 Long, Kyle	OL	6-6	320	4	Oregon	D1-13	D1-Chi-13
70 Massie, Bobby	OL	6-6	320	5	Mississippi	FA-Ari-16	D4-Ari-12
78 Poehls, Will	OL	6-8	334	1	Montana	FA-16	FA-Ten-14
73 Richardson, Cyril	OL	6-5	343	3	Baylor	FA-16	D5-Buf-14
71 Sitton, Josh	OL	6-3	318	9	UCF	FA-16	D4-GB-08
Sowell, Bradley	OL	6-7	309	5	Ole Miss	FA-Sea-17	FA-TB-12
65 Whitehair, Cody	OL	6-4	310	1	Kansas State	D2-16	D2-Chi-16
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
74 Bullard, Jonathan	DL	6-3	290	1	Florida	D3-16	D3-Chi-16
91 Goldman, Eddie	DL	6-4	320	2	Florida State	D2-15	D2-Chi-15
96 Hicks, Akiem	DL	6-5	336	5	Regina	FA-NE-16	D3-NO-12
Howard, Jaye	DL	6-3	301	5	Florida	FA-KC-17	D4-Sea-12
95 Jenkins, John	DT	6-3	359	4	Georgia	FA-Sea-17	D3-NO-13
67 Lewis-Moore, Kapron	DL	6-4	315	4	Notre Dame	FA-17	D6-Bal-13
93 Sutton, Will	DL	6-0	297	3	Arizona State	D3-14	D3-Chi-14
98 Unrein, Mitch	DL	6-4	299	6	Wyoming	FA-15	FA-Hou-10
69 Wilson, CJ	DL	6-3	290	7	East Carolina	FA-16	D7-GB-10
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
49 Acho, Sam	LB	6-3	260	6	Texas	FA-Ari-15	D4-Ari-11
58 Anderson, Jonathan	LB	6-1	235	2	TCU	FA-15	FA-Chi-15
94 Floyd, Leonard	LB	6-4	240	1	Georgia	D1-16	D1-Chi-16
50 Freeman, Jerrell	LB	6-0	236	5	Mary Hardin-Baylor	FA-Ind-16	FA-Ind-12
99 Houston, Lamarr	LB	6-3	274	7	Texas	FA-Oak-14	D2-Oak-10
52 Jones, Christian	LB	6-3	251	3	Florida State	FA-14	FA-Chi-14
44 Kwiatkoski, Nick	LB	6-2	242	1	West Virginia	D4a-16	D4a-Chi-16
92 McPhee, Pernell	LB	6-3	273	6	Mississippi State	FA-Bal-15	D5-Bal-11
45 Robertson-Harris, Roy	LB	6-7	268	1	UTEP	FA-16	FA-Chi-16
53 Timu, John	LB	6-0	245	2	Washington	FA-15	FA-Chi-15
59 Trevathan, Danny	LB	6-1	239	5	Kentucky	FA-Den-16	D6-Den-12
97 Young, Willie	LB	6-4	258	7	NC State	FA-Det-14	D7-Det-10
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
38 Amos, Adrian	DB	6-0	214	2	Penn State	D5-15	D5-Chi-15
20 Amukamara, Prince	CB	6-0	202	6	Nebraska	FA-Jac-17	D1-NYG-11
35 Banks, Johnthan	DB	6-2	185	4	Mississippi State	W-Det-16	D2-TB-13
26 Bush, Deon	DB	6-0	200	1	Miami	D4b-16	D4b-Chi-16
37 Callahan, Bryce	DB	5-9	191	2	Rice	FA-15	FA-Chi-15
25 Cooper, Marcus	CB	6-2	192	4	Rutgers	FA-Ari-17	D7-SF-13
21 Demps, Quintin	DB	5-11	210	9	UTEP	FA-Hou-17	D4-Phi-08
23 Fuller, Kyle	DB	5-11	190	3	Virginia Tech	D1-14	D1-Chi-14
32 Hall, Deiondre'	DB	6-2	201	1	Northern Iowa	D4c-16	D4c-Chi-16
36 Houston-Carson, DeAndre	DB	6-1	203	1	William & Mary	D6-17	D6-Chi-17
29 Jones-Quartey, Harold	DB	5-11	210	2	Findlay	W-Ari-15	FA-Ari-15
22 LeBlanc, Cre'Von	DB	5-11	190	1	Florida Atlantic	W-NE-16	FA-NE-16
27 McManis, Sherrick	DB	6-1	192	7	Northwestern	T-Hou-12	D5-Hou-10
31 Prosinski, Chris	DB	6-1	213	6	Wyoming	FA-15	D4-Jac-11
43 Reynolds, Rashaad	DB	5-11	187	1	Oregon State	FA-16	FA-Jac-14
30 Webb, B.W.	CB	5-11	190	4	William & Mary	FA-NO-17	D4-Dal-13
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
4 Barth, Connor	K	5-11	200	9	North Carolina	FA-16	FA-KC-08
16 O'Donnell, Pat	P	6-4	217	3	Miami	D6b-14	D6b-Chi-14
48 Scales, Patrick	LS	6-4	242	2	Utah State	FA-15	FA-Bal-11

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	13	Kevin White	11	Josh Bellamy
WR	81	Cam Meredith	19	Eddie Royal
WR	10	Markus Wheaton		Kendall Wright
LT	72	Charles Leno		Bradley Sowell
LG	71	Josh Sitton	57	Taylor Boggs
C	65	Cody Whitehair	55	Hroniss Grasu
RG	75	Kyle Long	76	Tom Compton
RT	70	Bobby Massie	64	Eric Kush
TE	86	Zach Miller	88	Dion Sims
QB	8	Mike Glennon	6	Mark Sanchez
RB	24	Jordan Howard	33	Jeremy Langford

DEFENSE

DE	96	Akiem Hicks	74	Jonathan Bullard
NT	91	Eddie Goldman	98	Mitch Unrein
DE	95	John Jenkins	93	Will Sutton
OLB	92	Pernell McPhee	97	Willie Young
ILB	59	Danny Trevathan	44	Nick Kwiatkoski
ILB	50	Jerrell Freeman	52	Christian Jones
OLB	94	Leonard Floyd	49	Sam Acho
CB	20	Prince Amukamara	22	Cre'Von LeBlanc
CB	25	Marcus Cooper	37	Bryce Callahan
SS	21	Quintin Demps	29	Harold Jones-Quartey
FS		Eddie Jackson (R)	38	Adrian Amos

SPECIALISTS

K	4	Connor Barth	KR	26	Benny Cunningham
P	16	Pat O'Donnell	PR		Eddie Jackson (R)

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
CB	Prince Amukamara	Jacksonville
CB	Marcus Cooper	Arizona
S	Quintin Demps	Houston
QB	Mike Glennon	Tampa Bay
DL	John Jenkins	Seattle
QB	Mark Sanchez	Dallas
TE	Dion Sims	Miami
OT	Bradley Sowell	Seattle
WR	Markus Wheaton	Pittsburgh
WR	Kendall Wright	Tennessee

KEY LOSSES −

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
QB	Jay Cutler	Retired
WR	Alshon Jeffery	Philadelphia
CB	Tracy Porter	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE BEARS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP CHICAGO "Mike Glennon is a classic pocket passer with a big arm, and people tend to overlook his 30-to-15 career touchdown-to-interception ratio. ... GM Ryan Pace shocked the NFL and maybe his own coach John Fox when he traded up to No. 2 in the draft and took Mitch Trubisky. ... You can't fault them for trying to fix the position, but you can critique Trubisky as a one-year starter who did not exude much personality in his interviews and visits. ... With this dramatic move, Fox will have to manage two parallel tracks — one for Glennon, the presumptive starter in 2017, and one for Trubisky, the quarterback of the future. ... Running back Jordan Howard was a bright spot when he rushed for over 1,300 yards and six touchdowns as a rookie. ... Wide receiver Kevin White has played four games in two seasons — this is a prove-it year for him. ... Cameron Meredith led the team with 66 receptions, and when Alshon Jeffery signed with the Eagles, he was penciled in as a starter. ... Tight end Zach Miller has struggled staying healthy, so they took a shot on Ashland phenom Adam Shaheen in the second round. ... Center Cody Whitehair looks like a mainstay in the middle of their line, and last year's No. 1 choice, outside linebacker Leonard Floyd, racked up seven sacks in 12 games. ... Chicago was tied for dead last at minus-20 in the turnover margin, so taking care of the football will be a major priority for Glennon and Co."

BEARS IN THE *DRAFT*

D

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Mitch Trubisky	QB	6-3	220	North Carolina
2.	Adam Shaheen	TE	6-6	277	Ashland
4.	Eddie Jackson	FS	6-0	201	Alabama
4.	Tarik Cohen	RB	5-6	179	North Carolina A&T
5.	Jordan Morgan	OL	6-3	309	Kutztown

Despite GM Ryan Pace's protestations to the contrary, the Bears are unlikely to get much immediate help from this draft class. It includes three picks who played below the FBS level, including two from D-II — Adam Shaheen and Jordan Morgan. Mitch Trubisky, a surprise pick at No. 2 overall, is not being counted on to play in 2017. Eddie Jackson is the best bet to contribute right away, but only if he's fully recovered from the fractured leg that ended his 2016 season in October. Cohen will add depth in a backfield that can be considered a team strength. Morgan will have to adjust to the athleticism and speed of the NFL.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

MAKING A MOVE Bears GM Ryan Pace was widely panned for moving up to the second overall pick in the draft to get Mitch Trubisky by swapping the third overall pick along with a third-rounder (67th overall) and fourth-rounder (111th overall) this year, plus a third-round pick in 2018. Pace explains: "If we want to be great, you just can't sit on your hands," he says. "There are times when you've got to be aggressive. I just don't want to be average around here; I want to be great, and these are the moves you have to make."

THROWER, NOT A RUNNER New quarterback Mike Glennon knows he's not perfect. "I don't think anyone is going to mistake me for Michael Vick, ever, or anyone of that nature," he says. "But I move well enough. Look at guys like Tom Brady, like Peyton Manning, like essentially every quarterback that has won the Super Bowl the past however-many years — guys that probably are in the same ballpark as me as far as being an athlete."

BY ANY OTHER NAME While 5'6" running back Tarik Cohen is fine with the "Human Joystick" nickname that came from the producer of his YouTube video, the fourth-round pick prefers the nickname "Chicken Salad," that he got from an ESPN announcer. "Why Chicken Salad?" he was asked. "It's different," he said. "I never heard anybody called that before."

EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS Jordan Howard, the Bears' 2016 fifth-round pick (150th overall), thought he deserved more respect, and then he proved it. "It was definitely motivation," he says. "Because I thought I was a lot better than a lot of people who got selected before me. But that was out of my control." After 12 carries in the first three weeks, Howard took control of the Bears' run game, rushing for a team rookie-record 1,313 yards. He averaged 5.2 yards per carry — second only to LeSean McCoy's 5.5, among players with at least 150 carries.

KEEP IT SIMPLE Bears safeties had a total of one interception last season. Veteran safety Quintin Demps, who was signed in free agency, had six picks for the Texans last year. Demps' interception philosophy is basic: "Just (use) your eyes," he says. "You have to be disciplined. You have to let it come to you, man. You can't force it, because then you're going to give up something."

HE'LL TRY ANYTHING Bears fifth-round pick Jordan Morgan preferred basketball in high school, but he decided to give football a try in his senior year. "You either had to do community service, or you had to do extracurricular activities," he says. "I went with football because I had a few friends on the team who were already encouraging me to try it, so I figured, 'Why not?'" The next year Morgan walked on at Kutztown University, and last season, he won the Gene Upshaw Award as the top offensive or defensive lineman in Division II.

LESS IS MORE By carrying 25 fewer pounds than the 280 or so he weighed when he signed with the Bears after the 2014 season, outside linebacker Pernell McPhee predicts bad things for Bears opponents in 2017. "It's going to be dangerous," McPhee says. "Obviously last year wasn't a great year, and the year before wasn't one. So now, hopefully by me losing weight and staying focused, we can turn this thing around."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

75 A league-best 75 percent of the Bears' carries on third-and-short, fourth-and-short and goal-to-go achieved a first down or touchdown.

18 Chicago's offense finished 30th in the NFL in turnovers per drive, coughing it up on 18 percent of their possessions.

6.7 Chicago's defense forced turnovers on just 6.7 percent of drives, the third-worst rate in the league.

WILLIE YOUNG

Trubisky: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Young: Joe Robbins/Getty Images

DETROIT LIONS

There were wholesale changes, followed by incremental progress. The hope for the Detroit Lions is that a new regime led by general manager Bob Quinn will continue where it left off in 2016. The Lions returned to the playoffs, got significant contributions from Quinn's first draft class and, with a franchise quarterback already in place, appeared to lay a foundation for success.

One thing hasn't changed, however. The Lions still haven't won a playoff game since 1991, and they haven't won a division title since '93, letting one slip away last winter with three consecutive losses to end the season. So while coach Jim Caldwell's even-keeled approach is appreciated in the locker room and seems to be a good fit with Quinn, Caldwell is facing a contract year — and a tougher schedule — with little job security.

OFFENSE There is no more debate about Matthew Stafford's value. The only question in the offseason was just how much the 29-year-old quarterback would be paid as the Lions began negotiating a contract extension that may make him the league's highest-paid player.

Stafford is coming off one of his best seasons. He passed for 4,327 yards and 24 touchdowns with 10 interceptions, despite playing the last month with the middle finger on his throwing hand in a splint. Prior to that, he led the team to an NFL-record eight fourth-quarter comeback wins. And he looked comfortable in his first full year with Jim Bob Cooter as offensive coordinator, spreading the ball around in a controlled short passing attack.

What would make him even more comfortable this season would be an improved run game. The Lions ranked 30th in the NFL in rushing and didn't have a back gain more than 70 yards in a game all season. But starter Ameer Abdullah is back after suffering a season-ending foot injury in Week 2 last season, and he could form a dynamic tandem with Theo Riddick, a matchup nightmare out of the backfield who also was lost to injury late last season. (Riddick's 80 receptions in 2015 tied for the lead among NFL running backs.) The emergence of Zach Zenner as a viable fill-in starter provides some depth, but if Abdullah can't stay on the field, it'll spell trouble again.

The biggest change in the Lions' offensive outlook can be found in the trenches, where Quinn has completely revamped the offensive line. A year after investing heavily in the draft, the GM splurged in free agency this winter, signing Rick Wagner — one of the top right tackles on the market — and then outbidding Seattle to land right guard T.J. Lang, who'd been a mainstay for division rival Green Bay. They'll join a young group anchored by last year's rookie first-round pick, Taylor Decker, who had an impressive debut at left tackle. The moves, along with the signing of tight end Darren Fells, give the Lions one of the league's better pass-blocking units, and Lang's arrival adds some veteran leadership as well as a much-needed nasty streak.

Last year's big free-agent addition — receiver Marvin Jones Jr. — started fast while trying to fill the cleats of retired star Calvin Johnson. But after a 205-yard, two-TD day at Lambeau Field in Week 3, his per-game averages the rest of the season (three catches for 44 yards) didn't measure up. That's one reason the Lions targeted another big wideout in the draft, Northern Illinois' Kenny Golladay, who'll compete for the No. 3 role behind Jones and Golden Tate. The wild card remains Eric Ebron, an athletic tight end who may never validate his top-10 draft choice but who has steadily improved.

DEFENSE It's a good thing the offense was able to extend drives last season, because the defense had far too much trouble getting off the field, ranking 31st in the league in third-down percentage. The Lions also finished last in opponent pass efficiency, tied for 30th in sacks and tied for 28th in takeaways.

Not surprisingly, the front office made adding defensive playmakers — and speed — a priority in the draft. The most notable

NFC NORTH FORECAST

2

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/CHAIRPERSON: Martha Firestone Ford
VICE CHAIRMAN: William Clay Ford, Jr.
PRESIDENT: Rod Wood
EXECUTIVE VP/GENERAL MANAGER: Bob Quinn
DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Kyle O'Brien
STADIUM: Ford Field (65,000)
SURFACE: FieldTurf Classic HD
WEBSITE: www.detroitlions.com
TICKETS: 1-877-212-8898
TRAINING CAMP: Detroit Lions Training Facility (Allen Park, Mich.)

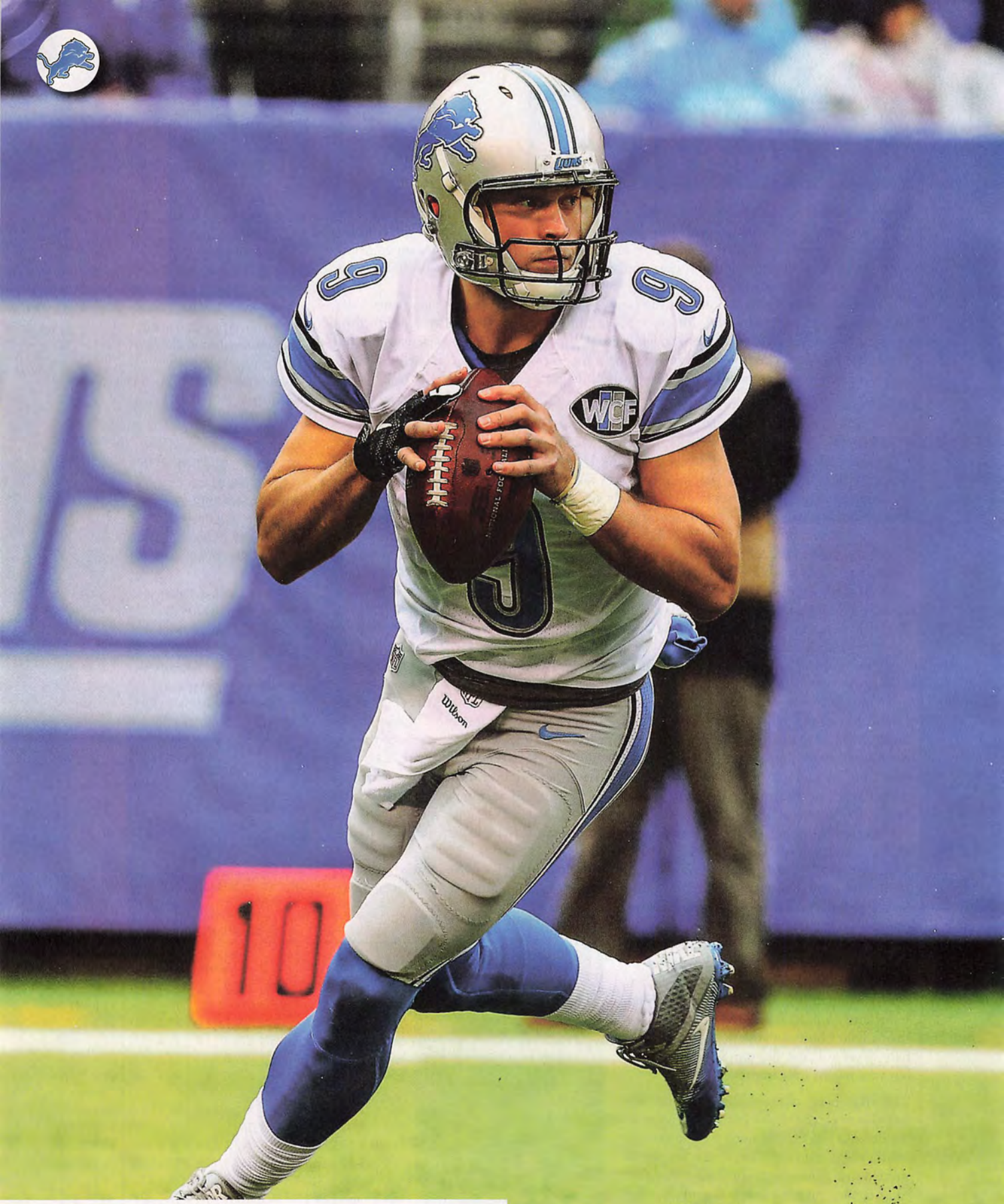
THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Jim Caldwell
RECORD WITH TEAM: 27–21
CAREER RECORD: 53–43
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Jim Bob Cooter
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Teryl Austin
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Joe Marciano
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/OFFENSIVE LINE: Ron Prince
QUARTERBACKS: Brian Callahan
RUNNING BACKS: David Walker
WIDE RECEIVERS: Robert Prince
TIGHT ENDS: Al Golden
DEFENSIVE LINE: Kris Kocurek
LINEBACKERS: Bill Sheridan
SAFETIES: Alan Williams
CORNERBACKS: Tony Oden

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	Arizona	1:00	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Sept. 18	at N.Y. Giants (Mon.)	8:30	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Sept. 24	Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Oct. 1	at Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Oct. 8	Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Oct. 15	at New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
BYE							
Oct. 29	Pittsburgh	8:30	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Nov. 6	at Green Bay (Mon.)	8:30	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Nov. 12	Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Nov. 19	at Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Nov. 23	Minnesota (Thu.)	12:30	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Dec. 3	at Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Dec. 10	at Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Dec. 16	Chicago (Sat.)	4:30	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Dec. 24	at Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Dec. 31	Green Bay	1:00	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)



QB MATTHEW STAFFORD

2016 RESULTS (9-7)

Sept. 11	at Indianapolis	W	39-35
Sept. 18	Tennessee	L	15-16
Sept. 25	at Green Bay	L	27-34
Oct. 2	at Chicago	L	14-17
Oct. 9	Philadelphia	W	24-23
Oct. 16	L.A. Rams	W	31-28
Oct. 23	Washington	W	20-17
Oct. 30	at Houston	L	13-20
Nov. 6	at Minnesota (ot)	W	22-16
Nov. 20	Jacksonville	W	26-19
Nov. 24	Minnesota	W	16-13
Dec. 4	at New Orleans	W	28-13
Dec. 11	Chicago	W	20-17
Dec. 8	at N.Y. Giants	L	6-17
Dec. 26	at Dallas	L	21-42
Jan. 1	Green Bay	L	24-31
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 7	at Seattle	L	6-26

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Matthew Stafford	594	388	4,327	24	10
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Theo Riddick	92	357	3.9	1	
Dwayne Washington	90	265	2.9	1	
Zach Zenner	88	334	3.8	4	
Matthew Stafford	37	207	5.6	2	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Golden Tate	91	1,077	11.8	4	
Anquan Boldin	67	584	8.7	8	
Eric Ebron	61	711	11.7	1	
Marvin Jones	55	930	16.9	4	
Theo Riddick	53	371	7.0	5	

KICKING: Matt Prater, 31-36 FGs, 31-33 PAT, 124 points
TACKLES: Tahir Whitehead, 132; Tavon Wilson, 89
SACKS: Kerry Hyder, 8.0; Devin Taylor, 4.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Four players tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	338.8	21	11
Rushing	81.9	30	14
Passing	256.9	11	7
Scoring	21.6	20	11
Third Down %	42.6	8	5
Punt Returns	12.3	3	2
Kick Returns	22.7	T12	6

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	354.8	18	9
Rushing	106.3	18	11
Passing	248.4	19	8
Scoring	22.4	13	6
Interceptions	10	T23	T11
Sacks	26	T30	16
Turnover Differential	-1	20	10

GOLDEN TATE

addition is at linebacker, where first-round pick Jarrad Davis — a natural leader who wowed scouts at Florida's pro day — is expected to step in immediately as a starter. The Lions cut ties with DeAndre Levy, who missed most of the last two seasons with injury, but they also got younger and deeper at the position. Davis' arrival — Quinn pegged him as a middle linebacker — may push incumbent starter Tahir Whitehead outside. But there's second-year pro Antwione Williams and an explosive hitter in rookie Jalen Reeves-Maybin pushing for jobs as well, while veteran Paul Worrilow, who spent last season in a backup role with Atlanta, provides some insurance and special-teams value.

Up front, everyone is expecting a bounce-back year from defensive end Ezekiel Ansah, who saw his sack production fall off dramatically as he battled a high ankle sprain for much of last season. If he can return to his Pro Bowl form, then the Lions might have enough depth on the line to create some havoc. Last year's breakout performer, Kerry Hyder, who went from the practice squad to team sack leader in 2016, is ready for an expanded role, while Cornelius Washington was an efficient pass rusher in a limited role in Chicago. Veteran Haloti Ngata still can stuff the run on the interior, and A'Shawn Robinson came on strong late in his rookie season.

The secondary is where the most competition will be in training camp, as Quinn & Co. have made it clear that jobs are up for grabs. Darius Slay validated a hefty contract extension with a Pro Bowl-caliber season. But the rest of the cornerbacks got some company as the Lions added former Raiders first-round pick D.J. Hayden and two confident rookies in Teez Tabor and Jamal Agnew. Tabor, an instinctive, fluid cover man, should challenge holdover Nevin Lawson for time opposite Slay right away, while Agnew's arrival might be bad news for Quandre Diggs, who struggled at nickel back last season. Regardless of who starts, the Lions look better equipped to handle the inevitable injuries in the secondary. Last year's collection of backups and street free agents got picked apart down the stretch.

Free safety Glover Quin remains the Lions' leader both on and off the field, in part because he never leaves it. Quin hasn't missed a game since his rookie season in 2009 and was the only defensive player in the NFL to play every snap last season. Tavon Wilson was solid in run support last season after coming over from New England. Hard-hitting Miles Killebrew, who impressed in third-down situations as a rookie, is a breakout candidate who could steal some of Wilson's snaps.

SPECIALISTS The special-teams units were a big reason why the Lions managed to sneak into the playoffs despite the late-season collapse. Matt Prater kicked a career-high 31 field goals, including 8-of-8 from 50 yards or more, to earn a Pro Bowl nod. Punter Sam Martin, who also serves as the holder on kicks, probably deserved a Pro Bowl invitation himself. He was a Pro Bowl alternate after breaking his own franchise record for net punting average (44.2 yards) for the fourth time in his four NFL seasons.

Quinn's roster-churning work in 2016 helped transform the Lions' coverage units into some of the league's best. But the return game is a question mark, with last year's dual returner, Andre Roberts, signing with the Falcons. Dwayne Washington may be the answer on kick returns, while Agnew figures to be in the mix on punt returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS With Caldwell back for a fourth season, the Lions are counting on continuity as they try to make back-to-back playoff trips for the first time in more than two decades. But they also know that continuity won't last long if they can't build off last year's progress. Stafford appears ready to take this franchise to the next level, but he'll need more help from some of the younger playmakers. Caldwell's staff has shown a knack for player development. This season, it's imperative they show even more.

Stafford: Al Bello/Getty Images; Tate: Tom Lynn

2017 VETERAN LIONS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
14 Rudock, Jake	QB	6-3	208	1	Michigan	D6a-16	D6a-Det-16
9 Stafford, Matthew	QB	6-3	226	8	Georgia	D1a-09	D1a-Det-09
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
21 Abdullah, Ameer	RB	5-9	203	2	Nebraska	D2-15	D2-Det-15
46 Burton, Michael	FB	6-0	247	2	Rutgers	D5-15	D5-Det-15
39 James, Mike	RB	5-10	223	3	Miami	FA-16	D6-TB-13
25 Riddick, Theo	RB	5-9	201	4	Notre Dame	D6b-13	D6b-Det-13
36 Washington, Dwayne	RB	6-1	223	1	Washington	D7-16	D7-Det-16
34 Zenner, Zach	RB	5-11	221	2	South Dakota St.	FA-15	FA-Det-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
10 Abbrederis, Jared	WR	6-1	195	3	Wisconsin	FA-17	D5-GB-14
49 Backman, Kennard	TE	6-3	245	2	UAB	FA-16	D6-GB-13
16 Billingsley, Jace	WR	5-9	189	1	Eastern Oregon	FA-16	FA-Det-16
85 Ebron, Eric	TE	6-4	253	3	North Carolina	D1-14	D1-Det-14
87 Fells, Darren	TE	6-7	281	3	UC Irvine	FA-Ari-17	FA-Sea-13
11 Jones Jr., Marvin	WR	6-2	198	5	California	FA-Cin-16	D5-Cin-12
13 Jones, TJ	WR	6-0	190	2	Notre Dame	D6-14	D6-Det-14
86 Lee, Khari	TE	6-4	253	2	Bowie State	W-Chi-16	FA-Hou-15
18 Spadola, Ryan	WR	6-1	204	4	Lehigh	FA-15	FA-NYJ-13
15 Tate, Golden	WR	5-10	197	7	Notre Dame	FA-Sea-14	D2-Sea-10
19 Turzilli, Andrew	WR	6-4	195	2	Rutgers	FA-16	FA-Ten-15
89 Wick, Cole	TE	6-6	257	1	Incarnate Word	FA-16	FA-Det-16
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
66 Dahl, Joe	OL	6-4	305	1	Washington State	D5-16	D5-Det-16
68 Decker, Taylor	T	6-7	311	1	Ohio State	D1-16	D1-Det-16
60 Glasgow, Graham	G/C	6-6	308	1	Michigan	D3-16	D3-Det-16
76 Lang, T.J.	G	6-4	318	8	Eastern Michigan	FA-GB-17	D4-GB-09
77 Lucas, Cornelius	T	6-9	330	3	Kansas State	FA-14	FA-Det-14
70 Robinson, Corey	T	6-7	317	2	South Carolina	D7-15	D7-Det-15
74 Rotheram, Matt	G	6-5	325	1	Pittsburgh	FA-16	FA-GB-15
64 Swanson, Travis	C	6-5	304	3	Arkansas	D3-14	D3-Det-14
63 Thomas, Brandon	G	6-3	317	3	Clemson	T-SF-16	D3-SF-14
72 Tomlinson, Laken	G	6-3	312	2	Duke	D1-15	D1-Det-15
71 Wagner, Rick	G/T	6-6	310	4	Wisconsin	FA-Bal-17	D5-Bal-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
94 Ansah, Ezekiel	DE	6-5	275	4	BYU	D1-13	D1-Det-13
97 Bryant, Armonty	DE	6-4	265	4	East Central	W-Cle-16	D7a-Cle-13
51 Copeland, Brandon	DE	6-3	263	2	Pennsylvania	FA-15	FA-Bal-13
79 Hill, Jordan	DT	6-1	291	4	Penn State	FA-Jac-17	D3-Sea-13
61 Hyder, Kerry	DE	6-2	270	1	Texas Tech	FA-15	FA-NYJ-14
92 Ngata, Haloti	DT	6-4	345	11	Oregon	T-Bal-15	D1-Bal-06
91 Robinson, A'Shawn	DT	6-4	320	1	Alabama	D2-16	D2-Det-16
97 Spence, Akeem	DT	6-1	307	4	Illinois	FA-TB-17	D4a-TB-13
99 Thornton, Khyri	DT	6-3	315	3	Southern Miss	W-NE-15	D3-GB-14
90 Washington, Cornelius	DL	6-4	292	4	Georgia	FA-Chi-17	D6-Chi-13
69 Zettel, Anthony	DL	6-4	270	1	Penn State	D6b-16	D6b-Det-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
50 Armbrister, Thurston	LB	6-3	235	2	Miami	W-Jac-16	FA-Jac-15
43 Bellore, Nick	LB	6-1	250	6	Central Michigan	FA-SF-17	FA-NYJ-11
Chubb, Brandon	LB	6-1	240	1	Wake Forest	FA-17	FA-LAR-16
58 Longa, Steve	LB	6-0	241	1	Rutgers	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
59 Whitehead, Tahir	LB	6-2	241	5	Temple	D5a-12	D5a-Det-12
52 Williams, Antwione	LB	6-3	240	1	Georgia Southern	D5-16	D5-Det-16
55 Worrilow, Paul	LB	6-0	230	4	Delaware	FA-Atl-17	FA-Atl-13
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
29 Bademosi, Johnson	CB	6-0	206	5	Stanford	FA-Cle-16	FA-Cle-12
38 Barnes, Adairius	CB	5-11	188	1	Louisiana Tech	FA-16	FA-Det-16
73 Burton, Pierce	T	6-6	305	1	Ole Miss	FA-17	FA-Min-14
26 Carey, Don	S	5-11	202	8	Norfolk State	FA-11	D6-Cle-09
33 Carter, Alex	CB	6-0	200	1	Stanford	D3-15	D3-Det-15
28 Diggs, Quandre	CB	5-9	200	2	Texas	D6-15	D6-Det-15
31 Hayden, DJ	CB	5-11	190	4	Houston	FA-Oak-17	D1-Oak-13
35 Killebrew, Miles	S	6-2	222	1	Southern Utah	D4-16	D4-Det-16
24 Lawson, Nevin	CB	5-9	192	3	Utah State	D4b-14	D4b-Det-14
41 Milligan, Rolan	S	5-10	200	1	Toledo	FA-17	FA-Dal-16
27 Quin, Glover	S	6-0	207	8	New Mexico	FA-Hou-13	D4a-Hou-09
23 Slay, Darius	CB	6-0	190	4	Mississippi State	D2-13	D2-Det-13
45 Washington, Charles	DB	5-10	192	1	Fresno State	FA-16	FA-Det-16
32 Wilson, Tavon	S	6-0	212	5	Illinois	FA-NE-16	D2-NE-12
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
42 Landes, Jimmy	LS	6-1	245	1	Baylor	D6c-16	D6c-Det-16
6 Martin, Sam	P	6-1	211	4	Appalachian State	D5b-13	D5b-Det-13
48 Muhlbach, Don	LS	6-4	258	13	Texas A&M	FA-04	FA-Bal-04
5 Prater, Matt	K	5-10	201	10	UCF	FA-14	FA-Det-06

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	15	Golden Tate		Kenny Golladay (R)
WR	11	Marvin Jones Jr.	13	TJ Jones
LT	68	Taylor Decker	77	Cornelius Lucas
LG	60	Graham Glasgow	72	Laken Tomlinson
C	64	Travis Swanson	60	Graham Glasgow
RG	76	T.J. Lang	66	Joe Dahl
RT	71	Rick Wagner	70	Corey Robinson
TE	85	Eric Ebron	87	Darren Fells
QB	9	Matthew Stafford	14	Jake Rudock
RB	21	Ameer Abdullah	34	Zach Zenner
RB	25	Theo Riddick	36	Dwayne Washington

DEFENSE

DE	61	Kerry Hyder	90	Cornelius Washington
DT	92	Haloti Ngata	97	Akeem Spence
DT	91	A'Shawn Robinson	99	Khyri Thornton
DE	94	Ezekiel Ansah	69	Anthony Zettel
OLB	59	Tahir Whitehead	55	Paul Worrilow
MLB		Jarrad Davis (R)	43	Nick Bellore
OLB	52	Antwione Williams		Jalen Reeves-Maybin (R)
CB	23	Darius Slay	31	D.J. Hayden
CB	24	Nevin Lawson		Teez Tabor (R)
FS	27	Glover Quin	26	Don Carey
SS	32	Tavon Wilson	35	Miles Killebrew

SPECIALISTS

K	5	Matt Prater	KR	36	Dwayne Washington
P	6	Sam Martin	PR	11	Marvin Jones Jr.

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
LB	Nick Bellore	San Francisco
TE	Darren Fells	Arizona
CB	D.J. Hayden	Oakland
OG	T.J. Lang	Green Bay
DT	Akeem Spence	Tampa Bay
OT	Rick Wagner	Baltimore
DE	Cornelius Washington	Chicago
LB	Paul Worrilow	Atlanta

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
S	Rafael Bush	New Orleans
DT	Stefan Charles	Jacksonville
LB	DeAndre Levy	Free Agent
OT	Riley Reiff	Minnesota
DE	Devin Taylor	Free Agent
DT	Tyrunn Walker	L.A. Rams
OG	Larry Warford	New Orleans

SCOUTING THE LIONS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP DETROIT "The Lions reached 9–4 in December only to lose their last five games and meekly go out of the playoffs at Seattle. ... Matthew Stafford has rare arm strength but is finally 'playing' the position. ... Running back Theo Riddick topped the team with 357 rushing yards, so getting Ameer Abdullah back to full health will be important to their offense. ... Tight end Eric Ebron caught over 60 passes, so maybe he has turned the corner as a pro. Golden Tate and Marvin Jones proved to be dependable targets for Stafford and solid free agent signings. ... GM Bob Quinn got good mileage out of his rookie linemen, Taylor Decker at left tackle and Graham Glasgow at center and left guard. This year, they addressed the right side of the offensive line by signing T.J. Lang (Packers) and Ricky Wagner (Ravens) during free agency. ... On defense, they need a healthy Ziggy Ansah, who hobbled through 13 games with a high ankle sprain. ... Defensive end Kerry Hyder surprised with eight sacks as a rotational pass rusher, and they are hoping first-round linebacker Jarrad Davis from Florida can shore up that position. He is a run-and-hit defender with excellent speed. Tahir Whitehead is not well-known, but he plays fast and collected 132 total tackles last season. ... Cornerback Darius Slay is a talented cover man, but they are taking a flyer on D.J. Hayden (Raiders), who has only had one healthy season in four years. ... Strong safety Tavon Wilson followed Quinn to Detroit and impressed with 89 tackles alongside Glover Quin, who has started 16 games for seven seasons in a row."

Davis: Tom DiPace; Hyder: Scott Grau/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images

LIONS IN THE *DRAFT*

B-

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Jarrad Davis	LB	6-1	238	Florida
2.	Teez Tabor	CB	6-0	199	Florida
3.	Kenny Golladay	WR	6-4	218	Northern Illinois
4.	Jalen Reeves-Maybin	LB	6-0	230	Tennessee
4.	Michael Roberts	TE	6-4	270	Toledo
5.	Jamal Agnew	CB	5-10	185	San Diego
6.	Jeremiah Ledbetter	DE	6-3	280	Arkansas
6.	Brad Kaaya	QB	6-4	214	Miami
7.	Pat O'Connor	DE	6-4	270	Eastern Michigan

Jarrad Davis, a three-down linebacker with tremendous leadership skills, filled a pressing need after the release of veteran DeAndre Levy. Teez Tabor's slow 40 times hurt his draft stock, but the Lions love his ball-hawk instincts. Kenny Golladay faces a steep learning curve, but he'll bring some much-needed size as a No. 3 receiver. Jalen Reeves-Maybin excelled as a special-teams ace at Tennessee, but he projects as an eventual starter on the weak side. Michael Roberts won't supplant starter Eric Ebron yet, but his size and hands make him an ideal red-zone target. Jamal Agnew, one of the fastest cornerbacks in the draft, also brings punt return ability. Jeremiah Ledbetter, who'll start working at defensive tackle, may need to add some weight. Brad Kaaya follows last year's sixth-round pick Jake Rudock in a developmental role. Pat O'Connor is an athletic defensive end who might find a practice-squad home.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

PROUD PAPA Matthew Stafford's offseason was a bit more hectic this year, and for good reason. His wife, Kelly, gave birth to twin daughters Chandler and Sawyer on March 31. "It has been life-changing, obviously," he says. "Your world revolves around them, but it's fun. Everybody tells you about it — what to expect, this and that — but you have to experience it for yourself." And with the injured finger on his throwing hand fully healed, he's getting plenty of experience changing diapers this spring. "They don't really talk back and tell me I'm bad at it," he says. "Not yet, at least."

PUNCHING THE CLOCK T.J. Lang made a name for himself playing the first eight years of his career in Green Bay. But he's excited to make a full-time home again in his native Michigan after signing a three-year, $28.5 million contract with the Lions in free agency. But even Lang, a 2009 fourth-round pick out of Eastern Michigan, was a bit overwhelmed by the fans' response to his signing this spring. "I had to remind people that, you know, I'm a guard," he laughs. "I'm not a receiver. I'm not a defensive end. I'm a lineman. We're the typical, blue-collar, lunch-pail guys, and I'm not going to make a play on Sunday that's gonna be the difference in the game."

HELLO, BRAD Quarterback Brad Kaaya, a rookie sixth-round pick out of Miami, is coming home, too. His mother, former actress Angela Kaaya Means, is a Michigan native, and they often visited family in the area. His mother also is something of a movie icon, playing a bit role as a neighborhood addict, Felisha, in the cult-classic comedy "Friday." The most popular scene ends as Ice Cube famously dismisses her with the line, "Bye, Felisha."

NEW LOOK The Lions' new Nike Vapor Untouchable uniforms feature the team's first redesign since 2009, eliminating black from their color scheme, bringing back throwback uniforms and adding "Color Rush" alternates — with steel gray jerseys and pants — for the first time. Team president Rod Wood says he hopes to use all four jerseys this season.

FORD FIELD FACELIFT Ford Field, the Lions' downtown Detroit home since 2002, is getting a $100 million upgrade, including a completely renovated suite level and new 152-foot wide video boards above each end zone.

DR. Z Teammates call running back Zach Zenner "Doc" in the locker room. And away from the field, that's what he aspires to be. Zenner, who graduated with a degree in biology from South Dakota State, plans to pursue a career in medicine when he's done playing pro football. He spent the 2016 offseason doing lab work in the hypertension and vascular research division at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit and worked on ultrasounds of rats' arteries at Veterans Affairs Hospital this past offseason.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

67.9 The Lions allowed 67.9 percent of their opponent's red-zone possessions to lead to touchdowns, the third-highest percentage in the NFL.

6.66 The Lions finished first in the NFL with 6.66 plays per drive and 3:10 time of possession per drive.

3:06 Detroit finished last in the NFL by allowing opposing offenses an average of 3:06 time of possession per drive.

KERRY HYDER

GREEN BAY PACKERS

NFC NORTH FORECAST

1

In the wake of a 44–21 blowout loss to Atlanta in the NFC Championship Game — the second time in three years his team had come up one game shy of a return trip to the Super Bowl — Aaron Rodgers issued a not-so-subtle public plea.

"I don't think we need to rebuild. We need to reload," the Green Bay Packers quarterback said that evening in the Georgia Dome. "We've just got to make sure we're going all-in every year to win."

While Rodgers chose his words carefully, comedic actor Keegan-Michael Key's "Anger Translator" character needed just one word at the NFL Honors awards show a few weeks later.

HELP!

Did an offseason that saw general manager Ted Thompson take an uncharacteristic dive into the deep end of the free-agent signing pool and the arrival of a 10-player draft class designed to fill specific roster holes constitute getting the two-time NFL MVP quarterback help? Rodgers wouldn't say. But he struck a hopeful chord when the team returned to work for the offseason program, knowing that at age 33 — and with designs on playing into his 40s — it's time to bring another NFL championship to Titletown.

"We're going to wait and see how everybody looks moving forward, but I like the pieces we've put in," Rodgers says. "I like our squad. It's just going to be about building that cohesion and chemistry in the locker room and on the field. We've got to make some leaps and bounds this offseason and obviously into training camp, but I feel like we're going to be really tough to stop on offense."

With Rodgers at the controls, that's usually the case, and with the free-agent arrivals of tight ends Martellus Bennett and Lance Kendricks, Packers coach Mike McCarthy spent the offseason in his mad-scientist lab concocting new formations to reinvigorate the passing game. But it's the defense that'll need to pull its weight, and Thompson's decision to use his first four draft picks on that side of the ball showed what a priority it is.

"I think we have a chance to be a better overall football team, and that's really the goal each and every year," McCarthy replied when asked after the draft if the defense was better. "The goal is to … be two wins better than we were last year."

OFFENSE As Rodgers goes, so go the Packers. When he was less than stellar to start last season, the offense sputtered and suddenly critics began whispering about his magic being gone. Then he uttered his "run the table" remark, the Packers won their final six regular-season games and a pair of playoff games, and all was right with the world as Rodgers finished the season on perhaps the best run of his career. In the final seven regular-season games (six wins, one loss), he completed 69.7 percent of his passes with 18 touchdowns and no interceptions (120.0 rating) — reminding everyone that he's one of the game's best.

The free-agent additions of Bennett and Kendricks, combined with holdover Richard Rodgers, will create intriguing wrinkles to an offense that still has Jordy Nelson, Randall Cobb and the emerging Davante Adams at wide receiver. The passing game will have to be its high-flying self, however, given the unproven situation at running back, where two-time 1,100-yard rusher Eddie Lacy left in free agency after last year's season-ending ankle injury. Converted wide receiver Ty Montgomery is the starter, but with three draft picks at the position, that could change.

The ongoing debate when it comes to the Packers' offense is whether McCarthy truly wants an authentic running game to pair with his otherworldly quarterback. While Rodgers surely can carry this team, as he did down the stretch last year, the group was at its best during his second MVP-winning season in 2014 when a robust ground game led by Lacy forced defenses to pick their poison and lightened Rodgers' load. With more

THE ORGANIZATION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE/BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PRESIDENT/CEO: Mark Murphy
EXECUTIVE VP/GENERAL MANAGER/DIRECTOR OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS: Ted Thompson
STADIUM: Lambeau Field (81,435)
SURFACE: Kentucky bluegrass reinforced with Desso GrassMaster
WEBSITE: www.packers.com
TICKETS: 1-920-569-7501
TRAINING CAMP: St. Norbert College (De Pere, Wisc.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Mike McCarthy
RECORD WITH TEAM: 114–61–1
CAREER RECORD: 114–61–1
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Edgar Bennett
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Dom Capers
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Ron Zook
ASSOCIATE HEAD COACH/LINEBACKERS: Winston Moss
QUARTERBACKS: Alex Van Pelt
RUNNING BACKS: Ben Sirmans
WIDE RECEIVERS: Luke Getsy
TIGHT ENDS: Brian Angelichio
OFFENSIVE LINE: James Campen
DEFENSIVE LINE: Mike Trgovac
CORNERBACKS: Joe Whitt, Jr.
SAFETIES: Darren Perry

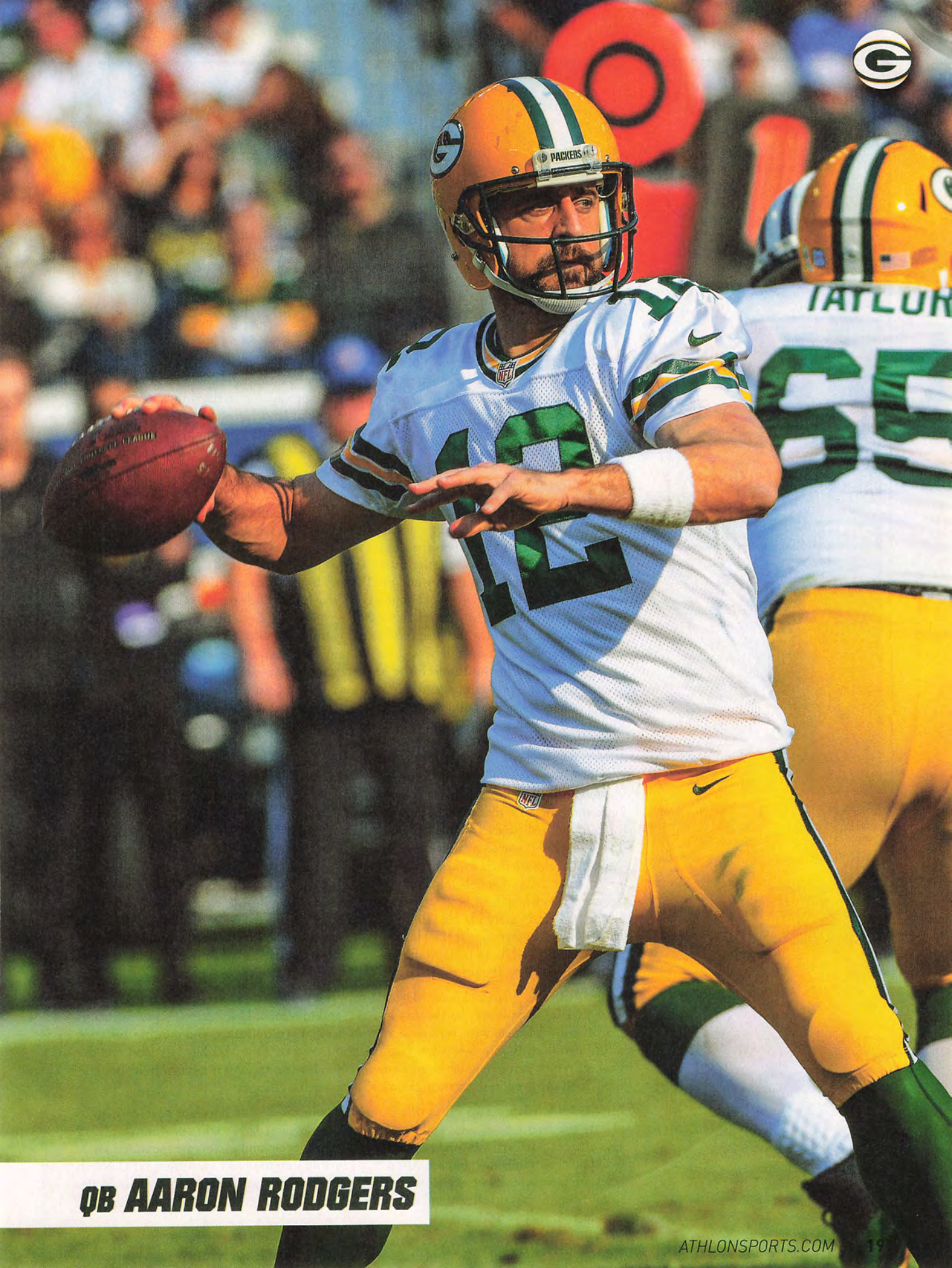
FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2012	11
2013	8
2014	12
2015	10
2016	10

2017 SCHEDULE / 2016 NFL RANKINGS

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	Seattle	4:25	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Sept. 17	at Atlanta	8:30	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Sept. 24	Cincinnati	4:25	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Sept. 28	Chicago (Thu.)	8:25	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Oct. 8	at Dallas	4:25	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Oct. 15	at Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Oct. 22	New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
BYE							
Nov. 6	Detroit (Mon.)	8:30	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Nov. 12	at Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Nov. 19	Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Nov. 26	at Pittsburgh	8:30	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Dec. 3	Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Dec. 10	at Cleveland	1:00	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
Dec. 17	at Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Dec. 23	Minnesota (Sat.)	8:30	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Dec. 31	at Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports



QB AARON RODGERS

2016 RESULTS (10-6)

Sept. 11	at Jacksonville	W	27-23
Sept. 18	at Minnesota	L	14-17
Sept. 25	Detroit	W	34-27
Oct. 9	N.Y. Giants	W	23-16
Oct. 16	Dallas	L	16-30
Oct. 20	Chicago	W	26-10
Oct. 30	at Atlanta	L	32-33
Nov. 6	Indianapolis	L	26-31
Nov. 13	at Tennessee	L	25-47
Nov. 20	at Washington	L	24-42
Nov. 28	at Philadelphia	W	27-13
Dec. 4	Houston	W	21-13
Dec. 11	Seattle	W	38-10
Dec. 18	at Chicago	W	30-27
Dec. 24	Minnesota	W	38-25
Jan. 1	at Detroit	W	31-24
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 8	N.Y. Giants	W	38-13
Jan. 15	at Dallas	W	34-31
Jan. 22	at Atlanta	L	21-44

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Aaron Rodgers	610	401	4,428	40	7
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Ty Montgomery	77	457	5.9	3	
Aaron Rodgers	67	369	5.5	4	
Eddie Lacy	71	360	5.1	0	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Jordy Nelson	97	1,257	13.0	14	
Davante Adams	75	997	13.3	12	
Randall Cobb	60	610	10.2	4	
Ty Montgomery	44	348	7.9	0	
Jared Cook	30	377	12.6	1	
Richard Rodgers	30	271	9.0	2	

KICKING: Mason Crosby, 26-30 FGs, 44-47 PAT, 122 points
TACKLES: Morgan Burnett, 93; Jake Ryan, 82
SACKS: Nick Perry, 11.0; Julius Peppers, 7.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Ha Ha Clinton-Dix, 5; Two players tied with 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	368.8	8	5
Rushing	106.3	20	9
Passing	262.4	7	4
Scoring	27.0	4	3
Third Down %	46.7	2	2
Punt Returns	9.0	14	9
Kick Returns	19.7	T24	T13

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	363.9	22	11
Rushing	94.7	8	5
Passing	269.2	31	15
Scoring	24.2	21	10
Interceptions	17	T4	T1
Sacks	40	T6	5
Turnover Differential	+8	6	3

JORDY NELSON

two-tight-end sets creating run-pass uncertainty for defenses, perhaps Montgomery or one of the rookies will prove capable of creating similar production in the run game.

The Packers lost guard T.J. Lang in free agency but landed former All-Pro Jahri Evans, whose arrival saved the Packers from having to start a rookie — or other unproven player — at right guard. The strength of the group is at tackle, where David Bakhtiari and Bryan Bulaga are coming off their best seasons and might be the league's best twosome. Center Corey Linsley, in a contract year, has Pro Bowl ability.

DEFENSE When they won Super Bowl XLV in 2010, the Packers had a top-five unit in both scoring defense and total defense. They haven't ranked that high in either category since, and last year's group was the second worst in the league against the pass. Damarious Randall and Quinten Rollins, the team's top two draft picks in 2015, dealt with injuries and inconsistent play last season, and the Packers' hope is that spending their top two picks on defensive backs again — Washington cornerback Kevin King and NC State safety Josh Jones — will make up for the release of No. 1 cornerback Sam Shields (concussions) and the free-agent departure of Micah Hyde. The Falcons exploited the Packers' secondary, and another promising season will be undone without significant improvement on the back end.

McCarthy and his staff preach the importance of players making first- to second- and second- to third-year jumps, and that'll always be the case with their draft-and-develop methodology for roster building. One reason last year's defense failed was that Randall and Rollins, after coming on late as rookies in 2015, regressed. How much injuries factored into their struggles is hard to say, but they'll have to rebound — even if King and Jones are instant contributors.

McCarthy has vowed to move his one-time defensive star, Clay Matthews, around his defense, rather than lining him up exclusively outside. Matthews' move inside in 2014 stabilized the defense that year, and he'll be spending time inside again this season. For it to work, though, the Packers will need $60 million man Nick Perry, the team's sack leader (11) last season, to prove to be more than a one-year wonder and for Jayrone Elliott and Kyler Fackrell to elevate their games.

Up front, Mike Daniels remains the anchor, but he needs help. The hope is that free-agent pickup Ricky Jean Francois and last year's first-round pick, Kenny Clark, provide it. In the back end, safety Ha Ha Clinton-Dix went to the first of what figure to be many Pro Bowls. A chance meeting at the Hall of Fame game with Packers legend Charles Woodson inspired Clinton-Dix to be more like the man who wore No. 21 before him, and he's well on his way to being the team's defensive leader.

SPECIALISTS Veteran kicker Mason Crosby has put together four straight excellent seasons after his inexplicably bad season in 2012, and his clutch kicks at the end of the team's playoff win at Dallas were yet another reminder of his elite status. The punting situation didn't significantly improve when Jacob Schum replaced Tim Masthay last year, and the Packers' return game remains largely a non-factor. Losing Hyde was a blow there, but getting Cobb involved in the return game could be a game changer.

FINAL ANALYSIS Two NFC title game berths in three years have not been enough to placate the team's passionate and demanding fan base, nor have eight consecutive playoff appearances. McCarthy is fond of pointing out that coaches and players are measured solely based on championships, and as 2010 recedes further into the rearview mirror, NFC North titles are insufficient. No one is on the hot seat per se, but only six players remain on the roster from the last title team, and while the 33-year-old Rodgers claims he can play another decade, the clock is ticking.

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN PACKERS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
6 Callahan, Joe	QB	6-1	216	1	Wesley	FA-16	FA-GB-16
7 Hundley, Brett	QB	6-3	226	2	UCLA	D5-15	D5-GB-15
12 Rodgers, Aaron	QB	6-2	225	12	California	D1-05	D1-GB-05
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
40 Kerridge, Joe	FB	6-0	245	1	Michigan	FA-16	FA-Was-16
88 Montgomery, Ty	RB	6-0	216	2	Stanford	D3-15	D3-GB-15
22 Ripkowski, Aaron	FB	6-1	246	2	Oklahoma	D6a-15	D6a-GB-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
17 Adams, Davante	WR	6-1	215	3	Fresno State	D2-14	D2-GB-14
81 Allison, Geronimo	WR	6-3	202	1	Illinois	FA-16	FA-GB-16
80 Bennett, Martellus	TE	6-6	275	9	Texas A&M	FA-NE-17	D2-Dal-08
18 Cobb, Randall	WR	5-10	192	6	Kentucky	D2-11	D2-GB-11
11 Davis, Trevor	WR	6-1	188	1	California	D5-16	D5-GB-16
19 Goodley, Antwan	WR	5-10	212	1	Baylor	FA-16	FA-Dal-15
83 Janis, Jeff	WR	6-3	219	3	Saginaw Valley St.	D7-14	D7-GB-14
84 Kendricks, Lance	TE	6-3	250	6	Wisconsin	FA-LAR-17	D2-LAR-11
13 McCaffrey, Max	WR	6-2	200	1	Duke	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
87 Nelson, Jordy	WR	6-3	217	9	Kansas State	D2a-08	D2a-GB-08
82 Rodgers, Richard	TE	6-4	257	3	California	D3b-14	D3b-GB-14
85 Sandland, Beau	TE	6-5	252	1	Montana State	FA-16	D7-Car-16
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
69 Bakhtiari, David	T	6-4	310	4	Colorado	D4a-13	D4a-GB-13
67 Barclay, Don	T/G	6-4	305	5	West Virginia	FA-12	FA-GB-12
75 Bulaga, Bryan	T	6-5	314	7	Iowa	D1-10	D1-GB-10
73 Evans, Jahri	G	6-4	318	11	Bloomsburg	FA-NO-17	D4-NO-06
57 Flores, Jacob	C	6-3	300	1	Dartmouth	FA-16	FA-GB-16
63 Linsley, Corey	C	6-3	301	3	Ohio State	D5a-14	D5a-GB-14
68 Murphy, Kyle	T	6-6	305	1	Stanford	D6-16	D6-GB-16
62 Patrick, Lucas	G	6-3	313	1	Duke	FA-16	FA-GB-16
78 Spriggs, Jason	T	6-6	301	1	Indiana	D2-16	D2-GB-16
65 Taylor, Lane	G	6-3	324	4	Oklahoma State	FA-13	FA-GB-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
97 Clark, Kenny	DT	6-3	314	1	UCLA	D1-16	D1-GB-16
76 Daniels, Mike	DE	6-0	310	5	Iowa	D4a-12	D4a-GB-12
98 Guion, Letroy	DT	6-4	322	9	Florida State	FA-Min-14	D5b-Min-08
95 Jean Francois, Ricky	DE	6-3	313	8	LSU	FA-Was-17	D7-SF-09
94 Lowry, Dean	DE	6-6	296	1	Northwestern	D4b-16	D4b-GB-16
96 Price, Brian	DT	6-3	318	1	UTSA	FA-16	FA-GB-16
99 Ringo, Christian	DT	6-1	298	1	UL Lafayette	D6b-15	D6b-GB-15
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
91 Elliott, Jayrone	LB	6-3	255	3	Toledo	FA-14	FA-GB-14
51 Fackrell, Kyler	LB	6-5	245	1	Utah State	D3-16	D3-GB-16
93 Gilbert, Reggie	LB	6-3	261	1	Arizona	FA-16	FA-GB-16
50 Martinez, Blake	LB	6-2	237	1	Stanford	D4a-16	D4a-GB-16
49 Mathews, Derrick	LB	6-0	232	1	Houston	FA-16	FA-Was-15
52 Matthews, Clay	LB	6-3	255	8	USC	D1b-09	D1b-GB-09
53 Perry, Nick	LB	6-3	265	5	USC	D1-12	D1-GB-12
47 Ryan, Jake	LB	6-2	240	2	Michigan	D4-15	D4-GB-15
48 Thomas, Joe	LB	6-1	227	2	South Carolina St.	PS-Dal-15	FA-GB-14
58 Tripp, Jordan	LB	6-3	234	3	Montana	FA-16	D5-Mia-14
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
29 Brice, Kentrell	S	5-11	200	1	Louisiana Tech	FA-16	FA-GB-16
42 Burnett, Morgan	S	6-1	209	7	Georgia Tech	D3-10	D3-GB-10
21 Clinton-Dix, Ha Ha	S	6-1	208	3	Alabama	D1-14	D1-GB-14
25 Evans, Marwin	S	5-11	211	1	Utah State	FA-16	FA-GB-16
39 Goodson, Demetri	CB	5-11	197	3	Baylor	D6-14	D6-GB-14
36 Gunter, LaDarius	CB	6-2	201	2	Miami	FA-15	FA-GB-15
28 Hawkins, Josh	CB	5-10	189	1	East Carolina	FA-16	FA-GB-16
31 House, Davon	CB	6-0	200	6	New Mexico State	FA-Jac-17	D4-GB-11
23 Randall, Damarious	CB	5-11	196	2	Arizona State	D1-15	D1-GB-15
24 Rollins, Quinten	CB	5-11	195	2	Miami (OH)	D2-15	D2-GB-15
26 Waters, Herb	CB	6-0	188	1	Miami	FA-16	FA-GB-16
35 Whitehead, Jermaine	S	5-11	195	1	Auburn	FA-16	FA-SF-15
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
2 Crosby, Mason	K	6-1	207	10	Colorado	D6c-07	D6c-GB-07
72 Pepper, Taybor	LS	6-4	245	1	Michigan State	FA-17	FA-GB-17
10 Schum, Jacob	P	5-10	211	2	Buffalo	W-TB-16	FA-Cle-13

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	87	Jordy Nelson	17	Davante Adams
WR	18	Randall Cobb	81	Geronimo Allison
LT	69	David Bakhtiari	78	Jason Spriggs
LG	65	Lane Taylor	62	Lucas Patrick
C	63	Corey Linsley	57	Jacob Flores
RG	73	Jahri Evans	67	Don Barclay
RT	75	Bryan Bulaga	68	Kyle Murphy
TE	80	Martellus Bennett	82	Richard Rodgers
QB	12	Aaron Rodgers	7	Brett Hundley
FB	22	Aaron Ripkowski	40	Joe Kerridge
RB	88	Ty Montgomery	30	Jamaal Williams (R)

DEFENSE

DE	95	Ricky Jean Francois	94	Dean Lowry
NT	97	Kenny Clark	98	Letroy Guion
DE	76	Mike Daniels	90	Montravius Adams (R)
OLB	52	Clay Matthews	45	Vince Biegel (R)
ILB	47	Jake Ryan	49	Derrick Matthews
ILB	50	Blake Martinez	48	Joe Thomas
OLB	53	Nick Perry	91	Jayrone Elliott
CB	20	Kevin King (R)	24	Quinten Rollins
CB	23	Damarious Randall	31	Davon House
SS	42	Morgan Burnett	27	Josh Jones (R)
FS	21	Ha Ha Clinton-Dix	29	Kentrell Brice

SPECIALISTS

K	2	Mason Crosby	KR	83	Jeff Janis
P	10	Jake Schum	PR	18	Randall Cobb

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

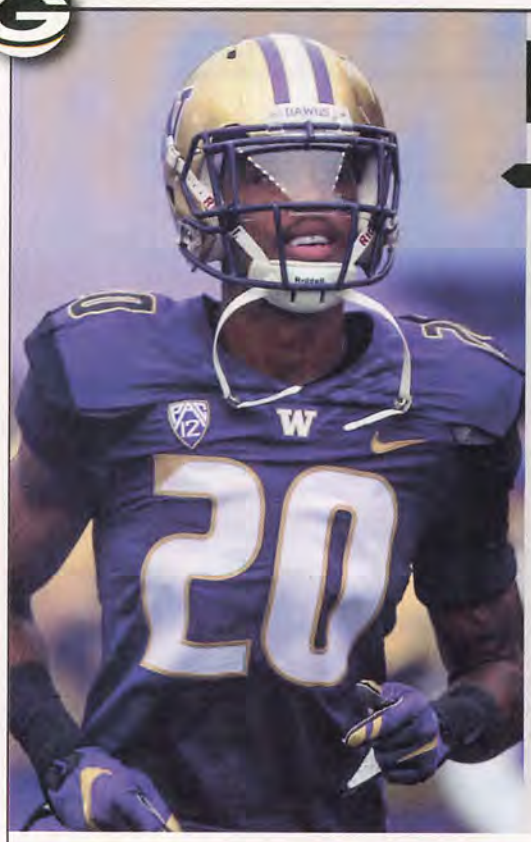
POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
TE	Martellus Bennett	New England
OG	Jahri Evans	New Orleans
CB	Davon House	Jacksonville
DT	Ricky Jean Francois	Washington
TE	Lance Kendricks	L.A. Rams

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
TE	Jared Cook	Oakland
S	Micah Hyde	Buffalo
OLB	Datone Jones	Minnesota
RB	Eddie Lacy	Seattle
OG	T.J. Lang	Detroit
OLB	Julius Peppers	Carolina
C	JC Tretter	Cleveland

SCOUTING THE PACKERS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP GREEN BAY "Aaron Rodgers was simply stunning last year. He makes it look easy in gliding from the pocket and making throws on the move. As long as he is on the field, they are clearly the class of the NFC North. ... Ty Montgomery converted from receiver to running back, but even going back to his days at Stanford, he had a running back build and was always a physical returner. I think BYU's Jamaal Williams will have a great chance to contribute as a rookie. He is an instinctive runner between the tackles. ... When talks with tight end Jared Cook broke down, GM Ted Thompson signed Martellus Bennett from the Patriots. ... Jordy Nelson returned to form. He was really good. Davante Adams responded with 75 receptions. That's two really nice targets for Rodgers. ... The line is anchored quietly by two underrated players, left tackle David Bakhtiari and center Corey Linsley, but T.J. Lang and JC Tretter left in free agency. ... Defensive end Mike Daniels is undervalued outside their building, but internally, they have high regard for him. ... Outside linebacker Nick Perry played in 14 games and had 11 sacks. ... Jake Ryan and Blake Martinez are only adequate at the inside linebacker posts. ... At the corner spots, they signed Davon House (Jaguars) and drafted Kevin King from Washington in the second round, so they really want to push Damarious Randall, Quinten Rollins and LaDarius Gunter. ... Morgan Burnett and Ha Ha Clinton-Dix make for a nice combination of safeties. ... It's almost automatic to assume this team makes the playoffs. But unless injuries hit, anything less than the NFC Championship would be a disappointment."



PACKERS IN THE *DRAFT* B-

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
2.	**Kevin King**	**CB**	**6-3**	**200**	**Washington**
2.	Josh Jones	S	6-2	220	NC State
3.	Montravius Adams	DT	6-4	305	Auburn
4.	Vince Biegel	LB	6-3	246	Wisconsin
4.	Jamaal Williams	RB	6-0	213	BYU
5.	DeAngelo Yancey	WR	6-1	220	Purdue
5.	Aaron Jones	RB	5-9	208	UTEP
6.	Kofi Amichia	G	6-3	304	South Florida
7.	Devante Mays	RB	5-10	230	Utah State
7.	Malachi Dupre	WR	6-2	196	LSU

It had been a long time since the Packers went into a draft week with so many needs on the roster, but by the end of the three-day draft, GM Ted Thompson had filled most of the existing holes he had — starting with trading back out of the first round to add an additional fourth-round pick. Signing six-time Pro Bowl guard Jahri Evans before the draft allowed him to focus on other positions and not reach for a guard in a thin offensive line class, and by picking Kevin King and Josh Jones with his first two selections, Thompson bolstered the weakest area of the roster. That bonus pick turned out to be Vince Biegel, who fills a vital need for an edge pass rusher. After four straight defensive picks, Thompson went to the offense and added three running backs — a position of blatant need where the projected starter is converted wide receiver Ty Montgomery.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

BY THE NUMBERS Receiver-turned-running back Ty Montgomery did his offseason research and uncovered an NFL rule that allows a skill-position player to keep his jersey number even if he moves to another position where that number is out of place. So Montgomery will keep wearing No. 88, even though he's officially a halfback now — a job coach Mike McCarthy believes he can handle. "I think Ty definitely has that ability," McCarthy says. "[But] it's very demanding. Obviously. It's a very heavy-lifting position, so availability will be Ty's No. 1 statistic."

DIET AND EXERCISE Aaron Rodgers joked on Twitter — or maybe he meant it — on the 12-year anniversary of the Packers drafting him that he'd like to play another 12 years. That'd put him at 44 upon retirement, and inspired by his pal Tom Brady, he might give it a shot because of changes he's made in his workouts and diet. "Tom takes really, really good care of his body and has for a long time, and he understands what it takes to get that longevity," Rodgers says. "It seems like, the older he's gotten the more athletic he's gotten. ... When you get older and you've started a of games and a lot of football and taken a lot of hits, for me, I just feel better when I'm eating a more plant-based, natural diet — stuff that's grown in the ground."

BELIEVE IT, OR NOT? Rodgers admitted that his "run the table" remark after four straight losses last season was intended to pump up his teammates' confidence as much as anything. But it showed his leadership, and the six-game winning streak to end the regular season provided validation. "Maybe not necessarily when I said it, was I 100 percent certain we could do it, but I did feel that we needed kind of a jolt of confidence and a challenge," Rodgers says. "I've always enjoyed meeting and exceeding challenges, and for me it was not only a confidence boost not only for the squad but hopefully a jolt for myself, that I need to start playing my best every week. And if I did that and guys believed in each other and played their best, we were going to start turning this thing around. And sure enough, it happened."

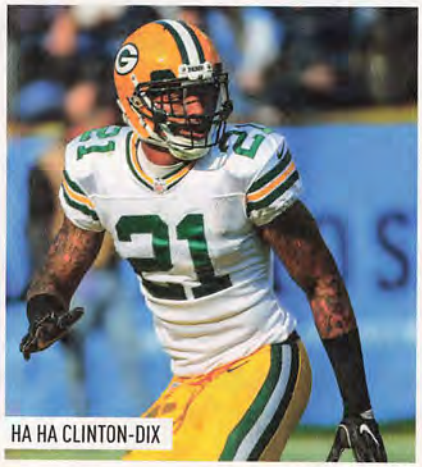
A DIFFERENT CAT The addition of Martellus Bennett will make for an interesting locker room dynamic, as his outspoken nature and effervescent personality will be different than the buttoned-up culture that most are accustomed to. "He came in, and I think he surprised a few people," McCarthy says. "I judge people by my own interaction. Everybody has a reputation. He's got a very creative, big personality. I think it's important for your program that you have to have boundaries, but you can make sure they're wide enough to fit in all the personalities, particularly with the skill sets these individuals have. So I embrace it. I think it's going to be good for our locker room. I think our media guys are really looking forward to it. I think it's going to give them more to write about and juice it up a little bit."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

7.5 The Green Bay defense had tackles broken on just 7.5 percent of defensive snaps, the third-lowest rate in the NFL.

49 Just 49 percent of runs by the Packers on third-and-short, fourth-and-short, and goal-to-go achieved a first down or touchdown, the third-lowest rate in the league.

6.3 The Green Bay offense averaged 6.3 yards per play on play-action passes, third worst in the league, despite employing Aaron Rodgers.



HA HA CLINTON-DIX

King: Craig Mitchelldyer; Clinton-Dix: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

For the first time since 2006, the Vikings head into a season without Adrian Peterson as the face of their franchise and the engine that drives their offense. Considering that Peterson is 32 and averaged 1.9 yards per carry while missing 13 games a year ago, well, they were better off starting anew. After releasing Peterson, general manager Rick Spielman went to work restocking an offense that ranked 28th in the NFL during an injury-ravaged 2016 season that saw the Vikings lose eight of their last 11 games to miss the playoffs for the second time in coach Mike Zimmer's three seasons.

Spielman gave $100 million to three prized offensive free agents — running back Latavius Murray and tackles Riley Reiff and Mike Remmers — and used his top two draft picks on Florida State running back Dalvin Cook and Ohio State center Pat Elflein. Spielman signed only one defensive free agent and didn't draft a defender until the fourth round, but the defensive-minded Zimmer was fine with that, saying, "I just want to win. And it's very obvious that we need to improve offensively."

OFFENSE After nine weeks of coordinating a hybrid offense on the fly after Norv Turner's surprising resignation last November, Pat Shurmur has an entire offseason to install his own attack. He runs a West Coast system with a heavy dose of the shotgun looks that quarterbacks Sam Bradford and Teddy Bridgewater prefer but Peterson struggled with.

At quarterback, Bradford is the undisputed starter in part because the Vikings believe Bridgewater will miss a second straight full season as he works his way back from the career-threatening knee injury suffered last August. Bradford was exceptional last season, arriving eight days before the regular season and setting an NFL record for completion percentage (71.6) while throwing only five interceptions. He was durable, quick-minded, smart with the football and steady in spite of losing Peterson in Week 2, both starting tackles by Week 6 and Turner heading into Week 8.

The key to the season is the offensive line. Again. A year after using 12 linemen, including five left tackles, the Vikings will start three new faces up front. Reiff and Remmers aren't elite, but they're young, durable and the best the Vikings could find with free agency and the draft so thin at tackle. Reiff was cast aside in Detroit for an upgrade and is moving from his more natural right tackle spot to left tackle. Elflein has some limitations athletically, but the third-rounder is strong and physical enough to start from Day 1 at center or right guard.

Murray and Cook improve the league's worst running attack instantly. Murray is a big back who can pass protect and make people forget last year's repeated failures in short-yardage situations. Cook is a three-down back with first-round talent who fell into the second round. He needs polish in pass protection and ball security, but he's a home run threat.

Shurmur is a pass-oriented coach but has worked to change the team's run-blocking schemes to include more outside zone plays that could benefit Murray and Cook. Zimmer is determined to run the ball to control the game and prevent a repeat of the plethora of three-and-outs that caused his defense to wear out down the stretch last season.

At receiver, the Vikings have two overachievers as starters in Stefon Diggs and Adam Thielen. Neither has the size of a typical No. 1 receiver, so it's time for the underachiever in the room — 2016 first-round draft pick Laquon Treadwell — to bounce back after an injury-marred season saw him start only one game and catch one pass.

DEFENSE The defense can be dominant, as it was while racking up 12 takeaways during the 5–0 start last year. Zimmer uses a 4-3 base but plays sub packages more than 60 percent of the time. His signature Double A-gap look puts offenses on the defensive because of all the different things the young playmakers can do out of that look.

A defense that ranked third in the NFL last year could be even better if 3-technique

NFC NORTH FORECAST

3

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/CHAIRMAN: Zygi Wilf
EXECUTIVE VP OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS: Rob Brzezinski
GENERAL MANAGER: Rick Spielman
STADIUM: U.S. Bank Stadium (66,665)
SURFACE: UBU Speed Series S5-M
WEBSITE: www.vikings.com
TICKETS: 1-612-33-VIKES (338-4537)
TRAINING CAMP: Minnesota State University (Mankato, Minn.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Mike Zimmer
RECORD WITH TEAM: 26–22
CAREER RECORD: 26–22
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Pat Shurmur
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: George Edwards
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Mike Priefer
QUARTERBACKS: Kevin Stefanski
RUNNING BACKS: Ken Polamalu
WIDE RECEIVERS: Darrell Hazell
TIGHT ENDS: Clancy Barone
OFFENSIVE LINE: Tony Sparano
DEFENSIVE LINE: Andre Patterson
LINEBACKERS: Adam Zimmer
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Jerry Gray

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE / 2016 NFL RANKINGS

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 11	New Orleans (Mon.)	7:10	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Sept. 17	at Pittsburgh	1:00	11-5	372.6 (7)	342.6 (12)	24.9 (10t)	20.4 (10)
Sept. 24	Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Oct. 1	Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Oct. 9	at Chicago (Mon.)	8:30	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Oct. 15	Green Bay	1:00	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Oct. 22	Baltimore	1:00	8-8	347.7 (17)	322.1 (7)	21.4 (21)	20.1 (9)
Oct. 29	vs. Cleveland (London)	9:30 am	1-15	311.0 (30)	392.4 (31)	16.5 (31)	28.3 (30)
BYE							
Nov. 12	at Washington	1:00	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Nov. 19	L.A. Rams	1:00	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Nov. 23	at Detroit (Thu.)	12:30	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Dec. 3	at Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Dec. 10	at Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Dec. 17	Cincinnati	1:00	6-9-1	356.9 (13)	350.8 (17)	20.3 (24)	19.7 (8)
Dec. 23	at Green Bay (Sat.)	8:30	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Dec. 31	Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)

QB SAM BRADFORD

2016 RESULTS (8-8)

Sept. 11	at Tennessee	W	25-16
Sept. 18	Green Bay	W	17-14
Sept. 25	at Carolina	W	22-10
Oct. 3	N.Y. Giants	W	24-10
Oct. 9	Houston	W	31-13
Oct. 23	at Philadelphia	L	10-21
Oct. 31	at Chicago	L	10-20
Nov. 6	Detroit (ot)	L	16-22
Nov. 13	at Washington	L	20-26
Nov. 20	Arizona	W	30-24
Nov. 24	at Detroit	L	13-16
Dec. 1	Dallas	L	15-17
Dec. 11	at Jacksonville	W	25-16
Dec. 18	Indianapolis	L	6-34
Dec. 24	at Green Bay	L	25-38
Jan. 1	Chicago	W	38-10

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Sam Bradford	552	395	3,877	20	5
RUSHING	**ATT**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
Jerick McKinnon	159		539	3.4	2
Matt Asiata	121		402	3.3	6
RECEIVING	**REC**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
Stefon Diggs	84		903	10.8	3
Kyle Rudolph	83		840	10.1	7
Adam Thielen	69		967	14.0	5
Cordarrelle Patterson	52		453	8.7	2
Jerick McKinnon	43		255	5.9	2
Matt Asiata	32		263	8.2	0
Charles Johnson	20		232	11.6	0

KICKING: Kai Forbath, 15-15 FGs, 11-14 PAT, 56 points
TACKLES: Eric Kendricks, 109; Harrison Smith, 91
SACKS: Danielle Hunter, 12.5; Everson Griffen, 8.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Xavier Rhodes, 5; Trae Waynes, 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	315.1	28	14
Rushing	75.3	32	16
Passing	239.8	18	11
Scoring	20.4	23	12
Third Down %	38.0	18	10
Punt Returns	10.4	8	5
Kick Returns	27.3	T1	T1

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	314.9	3	2
Rushing	106.9	20	12
Passing	207.9	3	1
Scoring	19.2	6	4
Interceptions	14	T12	T6
Sacks	41	5	4
Turnover Differential	+11	T4	T1

HARRISON SMITH

tackle Sharrif Floyd is able to bounce back from nerve damage in his knee. He missed 15 games last year and isn't being counted on to return this year. The Vikings signed former Packers first-round draft pick Datone Jones, an end who the Vikings believe is better suited to play the penetrating 3-technique spot. Spielman also made Iowa tackle Jaleel Johnson the team's first defender drafted. The fourth-rounder had 7.5 sacks a year ago and is stout enough to also hold the point of attack on the nose.

The line is the team's strength. Right end Everson Griffen is the rare elite pass rusher who is doggedly determined enough to be a strong run stopper as well. Nose tackle Linval Joseph sets the tone with size, strength and lateral quickness. Left end could see a battle between steady 10-year veteran Brian Robison and rising superstar Danielle Hunter, who had 12.5 sacks last year as a situational pass rusher. Hunter overwhelms right tackles with freakish athleticism for a man that big and strong. Zimmer often moves Robison inside in passing situations and allows him to freelance from the standing position.

Linebacker in the sub packages is set with two 25-year-old three-down players in Anthony Barr and Eric Kendricks. Kendricks keeps getting better and has led the team in tackles during both of his seasons. Barr, meanwhile, has All-Pro potential but had a flat, no-flash season while coasting too often a year ago. He needs to step it up this year.

In the base defense, the Vikings are looking for someone to win the weak-side position vacated with Chad Greenway's retirement. Emmanuel Lamur, who sometimes looked lost last year, is a candidate. So is rookie Ben Gedeon, who is limited athletically but would be primarily responsible for stopping the run in the base. Another option would be to move Kendricks to the weak side and let Kentrell Brothers play in the middle.

In the secondary, free safety Harrison Smith and cornerback Xavier Rhodes are Pro Bowlers with All-Pro potential. Smith is Zimmer's most useful game-plan gadget because he can rush off the edge and cover deep. Rhodes is a big, long corner who continues to gain confidence and savvy as a guy who can shadow the opponent's top receiver. On the other side is Terence Newman, who turns 39 before the season yet shows no signs of giving up the starting position. Trae Waynes, a first-round pick in 2014, has been groomed to take over the position but might have to wait another year. At strong safety, Andrew Sendejo can be a speed liability, but he's an overachiever who plays foot to the floor at all times.

The biggest hole defensively could be at nickel back, where Captain Munnerlyn left via free agency. The Vikings drafted his heir apparent, Mackensie Alexander, in the second round a year ago. Alexander has skills and instincts but is raw and immature.

SPECIALISTS There will be a new punter, holder and kick returner. The latter could see a big drop-off; Cordarrelle Patterson left after leading the league in kick returns in three of the past four seasons. The top contenders to replace him are third-day draft picks who play receiver — Rodney Adams, a fifth-round pick from South Florida, and Stacy Coley, a seventh-round pick from Miami (Fla.) who is a sub-4.5 runner. Punter and holder Jeff Locke moved on to Indianapolis in free agency. But after four mostly inconsistent years, it was time for a change. Ryan Quigley, who punted for the Cardinals last season, will get the first shot. Meanwhile, punt returner remains stress-free with underrated Marcus Sherels back for another season. Kicker also was stress-free last year after Kai Forbath replaced Blair Walsh. But Forbath has never lasted long in his previous NFL stints.

FINAL ANALYSIS The offensive line and running game should be much better, which could transform the Vikings from the worn-out 8–8 team that missed the playoffs last year into one that more closely resembles the one that went 11–5 and wrestled the NFC North title away from the Packers in 2015.

Bradford: AP; Smith: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN VIKINGS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
8 Bradford, Sam	QB	6-4	224	7	Oklahoma	T-Phi-16	D1-LAR-10
5 Bridgewater, Teddy	QB	6-2	215	3	Louisville	D1b-14	D1b-Min-14
6 Heinicke, Taylor	QB	6-1	210	2	Old Dominion	FA-15	FA-Min-15
7 Keenum, Case	QB	6-1	205	4	Houston	FA-LAR-17	FA-Hou-12
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
30 Ham, C.J.	RB	5-11	235	1	Augustana	FA-16	FA-Min-16
21 McKinnon, Jerick	RB	5-9	205	3	Georgia Southern	D3b-14	D3b-Min-14
25 Murray, Latavius	RB	6-3	230	4	UCF	FA-Oak-17	D6b-Oak-13
42 Sankey, Bishop	RB	5-10	213	3	Washington	FA-16	D2-Ten-14
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
81 Böhringer, Moritz	WR	6-4	225	1	None	D6a-16	D6a-Min-16
86 Carter, Kyle	TE	6-3	245	1	Penn State	FA-16	FA-Min-16
14 Diggs, Stefon	WR	6-0	191	2	Maryland	D5b-15	D5b-Min-15
15 Fruechte, Isaac	WR	6-3	210	1	Minnesota	FA-15	FA-Min-15
16 Jones, Cayleb	WR	6-2	209	1	Arizona	FA-16	FA-Phi-16
Mathews, Mitch	WR	6-6	215	1	BYU	FA-17	FA-KC-16
89 Morgan, David	TE/FB	6-4	265	1	UTSA	D6b-16	D6b-Min-16
82 Rudolph, Kyle	TE	6-6	265	6	Notre Dame	D2-11	D2-Min-11
19 Thielen, Adam	WR	6-2	200	3	Minnesota State	FA-13	FA-Min-13
11 Treadwell, Laquon	WR	6-2	215	1	Ole Miss	D1-16	D1-Min-16
Truesdell, Nick	TE	6-7	252	1	Grand Rapids CC	FA-17	FA-Ind-16
17 Wright, Jarius	WR	5-10	191	5	Arkansas	D4a-12	D4a-Min-12
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
64 Beavers, Willie	G	6-5	322	1	Western Michigan	D4-16	D4-Min-16
61 Berger, Joe	C	6-5	305	12	Michigan Tech	FA-11	D6-Car-05
75 Boone, Alex	G	6-8	310	7	Ohio State	FA-SF-16	FA-SF-09
68 Clemmings, T.J.	T	6-5	309	2	Pittsburgh	D4-15	D4-Min-15
62 Easton, Nick	C	6-3	303	2	Harvard	T-SF-15	FA-Bal-15
Fragel, Reid	T	6-8	308	1	Ohio State	FA-17	D7-Cin-13
69 Hill, Rashod	T	6-6	313	1	Southern Miss	PS-Jac-16	FA-Jac-16
67 Kerin, Zac	G	6-5	305	2	Toledo	FA-14	FA-Min-14
71 Reiff, Riley	T	6-6	305	5	Iowa	FA-Det-17	D1-Det-12
72 Remmers, Mike	T	6-5	310	4	Oregon State	FA-Car-17	FA-Den-12
74 Shepherd, Austin	T	6-4	327	2	Alabama	D7a-15	D7a-Min-15
78 Sirles, Jeremiah	G/T	6-6	315	3	Nebraska	T-LAC-15	FA-LAC-14
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
95 Crichton, Scott	DT	6-3	273	3	Oregon State	D3a-14	D3a-Min-14
90 DuBose, B.J.	DE	6-4	284	1	Louisville	D6b-15	D6b-Min-15
73 Floyd, Sharrif	DT	6-3	311	4	Florida	D1a-13	D1a-Min-13
97 Griffen, Everson	DE	6-3	273	7	USC	D4-10	D4-Min-10
99 Hunter, Danielle	DE	6-5	252	2	LSU	D3-15	D3-Min-15
92 Johnson, Tom	DT	6-3	288	6	Southern Miss	FA-NO-14	FA-Ind-06
95 Jones, Datone	DL	6-4	285	4	UCLA	FA-GB-17	D1-GB-13
98 Joseph, Linval	DT	6-4	329	7	East Carolina	FA-NYG-14	D2-NYG-10
96 Robison, Brian	DE	6-3	259	10	Texas	D4-07	D4-Min-07
93 Stephen, Shamar	DT	6-5	310	3	Connecticut	D7a-14	D7a-Min-14
91 Weatherly, Stephen	DE	6-5	265	1	Vanderbilt	D7a-16	D7a-Min-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
55 Barr, Anthony	LB	6-5	255	3	UCLA	D1a-14	D1a-Min-14
40 Brothers, Kentrell	LB	6-1	242	1	Missouri	D5-16	D5-Min-16
54 Kendricks, Eric	LB	6-0	232	2	UCLA	D2-15	D2-Min-15
59 Lamur, Emmanuel	LB	6-4	245	5	Kansas State	FA-Cin-16	FA-Cin-12
51 Robinson, Edmond	LB	6-3	245	2	Newberry	D7b-15	D7b-Min-15
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
20 Alexander, Mackensie	CB	5-10	192	1	Clemson	D2-16	D2-Min-16
32 Exum Jr., Antone	S	6-0	219	3	Virginia Tech	D6a-14	D6a-Min-14
41 Harris, Anthony	S	6-1	192	2	Virginia	FA-15	FA-Min-15
27 Kearse, Jayron	S	6-4	215	1	Clemson	D7b-16	D7b-Min-16
23 Newman, Terence	CB	5-10	197	14	Kansas State	FA-Cin-15	D1-Dal-03
25 Price, Jabari	CB	5-11	200	3	North Carolina	D7c-14	D7c-Min-14
29 Rhodes, Xavier	CB	6-1	218	4	Florida State	D1b-13	D1b-Min-13
36 Roberson, Tre	CB	6-0	200	1	Illinois State	FA-16	FA-Min-16
34 Sendejo, Andrew	S	6-1	210	6	Rice	FA-11	FA-Dal-10
35 Sherels, Marcus	CB	5-10	175	6	Minnesota	FA-10	FA-Min-10
Sinkfield, Terrell	CB	6-1	200	1	Northern Iowa	FA-17	FA-Mia-13
22 Smith, Harrison	S	6-2	214	5	Notre Dame	D1b-12	D1b-Min-12
26 Waynes, Trae	CB	6-0	190	2	Michigan State	D1-15	D1-Min-15
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
2 Forbath, Kai	K	5-11	197	5	UCLA	FA-16	FA-Dal-11
Koehn, Marshall	K	6-0	205	1	Iowa	FA-17	FA-Mia-16
47 McDermott, Kevin	LS	6-5	240	4	UCLA	FA-15	FA-SF-13
4 Quigley, Ryan	P	6-3	188	4	Boston College	FA-17	FA-Chi-12
Symmank, Taylor	P	6-2	185	1	Texas Tech	FA-17	FA-Min-17

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	14	Stefon Diggs	17	Jarius Wright
WR	19	Adam Thielen	11	Laquon Treadwell
LT	71	Riley Reiff	69	Rashod Hill
LG	75	Alex Boone	67	Zac Kerin
C	65	Pat Elflein (R)	62	Nick Easton
RG	61	Joe Berger	78	Jeremiah Sirles
RT	72	Mike Remmers	68	T.J. Clemmings
TE	82	Kyle Rudolph	89	David Morgan
QB	8	Sam Bradford	7	Case Keenum
RB	25	Latavius Murray	33	Dalvin Cook (R)
FB	89	David Morgan		

DEFENSE

DE	97	Everson Griffen	91	Stephen Weatherly
DT	95	Datone Jones	92	Tom Johnson
NT	98	Linval Joseph	93	Shamar Stephen
DE	96	Brian Robison	99	Danielle Hunter
SLB	55	Anthony Barr	51	Edmond Robinson
MLB	54	Eric Kendricks	40	Kentrell Brothers
WLB	59	Emmanuel Lamur	42	Ben Gedeon (R)
CB	23	Terence Newman	26	Trae Waynes
CB	29	Xavier Rhodes	20	Mackensie Alexander
SS	34	Andrew Sendejo	27	Jayron Kearse
FS	22	Harrison Smith	41	Anthony Harris

SPECIALISTS

K	2	Kai Forbath	KR	12	Rodney Adams (R)
P	4	Ryan Quigley	PR	35	Marcus Sherels

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
DL	Datone Jones	Green Bay
QB	Case Keenum	L.A. Rams
RB	Latavius Murray	Oakland
P	Ryan Quigley	Arizona
OT	Riley Reiff	Detroit
OT	Mike Remmers	Carolina

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
LB	Chad Greenway	Retired
WR	Charles Johnson	Carolina
OT	Matt Kalil	Carolina
P	Jeff Locke	Indianapolis
CB	Captain Munnerlyn	Carolina
WR	Cordarrelle Patterson	Oakland
RB	Adrian Peterson	New Orleans

SCOUTING THE VIKINGS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP MINNESOTA "In a shocking instant, all the positive vibes surrounding the Vikings crumpled to the ground with Teddy Bridgewater as he suffered a severe left knee injury during a non-contact drill that jeopardizes his return in 2017 and maybe his long-term career. ... Sam Bradford was exceedingly efficient with 20 touchdowns and only five interceptions, but he has some Alex Smith to him in that he is very risk averse. ... They parted ways with Adrian Peterson at running back and could be better with Latavius Murray (Raiders) and rookie Dalvin Cook, their second-round pick from Florida State. Murray is a hammer inside, and Cook can vanish with the football in his hands. ... Stefon Diggs is a speed merchant outside, and Adam Thielen emerged as a steady target for Bradford. ... All Kyle Rudolph does is show up and perform at a consistent level. ... The offensive line was a mess last year, and left tackle Matt Kalil signed with Carolina. The Vikings added both Riley Reiff (Lions) and Mike Remmers (Panthers) to be their bookend tackles. ... Everson Griffen had eight sacks last year, but Danielle Hunter, in a specialized role, accounted for 12.5 sacks and should take over the other end spot very soon. ... Chad Greenway retired, but Eric Kendricks and Anthony Barr were already full-time players anyway. ... Terence Newman seems ageless and still plays better than Xavier Rhodes and Trae Waynes. ... Harrison Smith is a Pro Bowl player. ... If the offensive line jells, maybe they can return to the playoffs. Otherwise, the Bradford/Bridgewater questions for 2018 will envelop the organization all season long."

Cook: John Sommers II; Diggs: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

VIKINGS IN THE *DRAFT*

B-

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
2.	Dalvin Cook	RB	5-11	213	Florida State
3.	Pat Elflein	C	6-3	303	Ohio State
4.	Jaleel Johnson	DT	6-3	316	Iowa
4.	Ben Gedeon	LB	6-2	244	Michigan
5.	Rodney Adams	WR	6-1	189	South Florida
5.	Danny Isidora	G	6-3	306	Miami (Fla.)
6.	Bucky Hodges	TE	6-6	257	Virginia Tech
7.	Stacy Coley	WR	6-1	195	Miami (Fla.)
7.	Ifeadi Odenigo	DE	6-3	258	Northwestern
7.	Elijah Lee	LB	6-2	229	Kansas State
7.	Jack Tocho	CB	6-0	202	NC State

General manager Rick Spielman traded a league-high seven times, moving up twice to get Dalvin Cook and Pat Elflein and then trading down five times to come away with nine more players on Day 3. Cook and Elflein will upgrade the league's worst running game. Cook and veteran newcomer Latavius Murray are three-down players who will split most of the running back workload. Meanwhile, Elflein, a polished blocker with a nasty side, should start at center or right guard right away. Jaleel Johnson provides depth at both defensive tackle positions, which was a priority with starter Sharrif Floyd's career in jeopardy. Ben Gedeon is limited athletically but will compete for the weak-side backer position in the base defense. Rodney Adams and Stacy Coley have kick return ability and are the top two candidates to replace Cordarrelle Patterson, who's now in Oakland. One of the more intriguing late picks is Bucky Hodges. He provides zero blocking at tight end, but is 6'6", 257, runs a 4.57 40-yard dash and has nice ball skills.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

SUPER HOME GAME? Owners Mark and Zygi Wilf grew up Giants fans. They've followed the NFL their whole lives. They know history. And, yes, they know that no NFL team has ever played in the Super Bowl in its own stadium. "Unfortunately, we know the history there," Mark said with a laugh when discussing Super Bowl LII at U.S. Bank Stadium in Minneapolis. "We'd like to be the first. That's what drives us."

ON THE MEND After a sixth and final eye surgery in June, coach Mike Zimmer said he'd finally "be good to go" after more than half a year spent battling and bouncing back from a detached retina. It was a scary time for the workaholic, who turns 61 on June 5. He had to miss a game and faced the real possibility of losing the eye. But he also kept his sense of humor. Serving as a celebrity roaster for Bengals coach Marvin Lewis, his close friend and former boss, Zimmer joked that his eye issues weren't all bad, especially during the 3–8 slide to end the season. "When I looked at my team, it was only half as bad," Zim said.

TOUGH ROAD BACK The Vikings' decision not to pick up the fifth-year option on QB Teddy Bridgewater this offseason made sense because there's no guarantee he'll play again after the devastating knee injury he suffered eight days before the 2016 season. The Vikings aren't expecting him to play this season. Bridgewater has been out of the public eye for most of his time away. Last September, he issued a statement, saying, "In order to have a testimony, you have to have a test. I come from amazing DNA, I watched my mom fight and win against breast cancer. We will, as a team, attack my rehab with the same vigor and energy. My faith is strong, my faith is unwavering and my vision is clear. My purpose will not be denied."

ON TARGET Playing the last 15 games in 2016, quarterback Sam Bradford set the franchise record for completions (395) while setting the NFL record for completion percentage (71.6). "It was pretty cool," he says. "But I'll trade it for more wins."

DUE DILIGENCE The Vikings had done extensive, months-long due diligence on off-the-field concerns about running back Dalvin Cook. But on the morning of the second round, general manager Rick Spielman needed more assurance. So he called and spoke with the Florida State running back for 45 minutes before later trading up seven spots to take Cook 41st overall. "I was eager to talk to him," Cook says. "For him to know that if he drafted me he was getting a guy that was going to represent the organization the right way and go to war for his teammates every game and help them win."

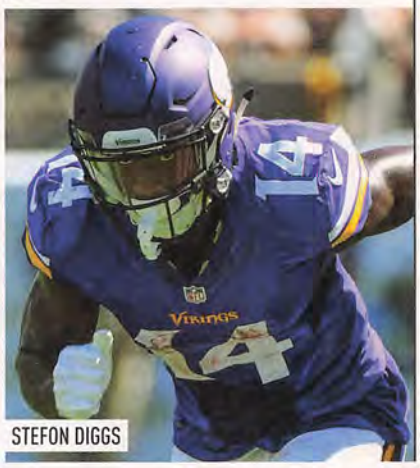
PLEASE DON'T HIT ME Cornerback Xavier Rhodes took up boxing this offseason. Wait. Scratch that. He took up training like a boxer. "Oh, no," Rhodes said when asked if he was ready for his first bout in the ring. "I don't want anyone hitting me in the face."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

47 Only 47 percent of the Vikings' carries on third-and-short, fourth-and-short and goal-to-go achieved a first down or touchdown, second worst in the NFL.

7.8 Minnesota finished first in the NFL in defensive Adjusted Sack Rate, sacking opposing quarterbacks on 7.8 percent of its opponents' pass attempts.

30.4 The Vikings had the fourth best starting field position in the league, averaging a start at the 30.4-yard line.



STEFON DIGGS

ATLANTA FALCONS

NFC SOUTH FORECAST

1

What if you had told quarterback Matt Ryan, head coach Dan Quinn and owner Arthur Blank that the second year of Atlanta's Seattle-inspired "Brotherhood" rebuild would net an MVP award for Ryan, record-setting stats for Kyle Shanahan's explosive offense, a division title and two playoff wins? What if you told them that Devonta Freeman would emerge as an elite running back and assumed draft bust Vic Beasley would lead the NFL in sacks?

If you stop the story on Feb. 4, 2017, this year's Falcons are without a doubt one of the hottest teams in the NFL come September. The problem is: 28–3.

Atlanta suffered the biggest blown lead in Super Bowl history to the New England Patriots, an unforgettable collapse. Shanahan, feted as a genius during an 11–5 regular season, became the Super Bowl scapegoat when Atlanta couldn't run out the clock in the fourth quarter. He's gone, and how well former USC head coach and brief Alabama offensive coordinator Steve Sarkisian replaces him is more important than any on-field position battle.

The blown lead will live forever in sports. What the Falcons do to combat that psychology in 2017 will determine their future more than any single play call or draft pick.

OFFENSE Sarkisian steps into a rare situation: The new coordinator has absolutely nothing to fix in the Falcons' offense. Atlanta finished 2016 first in points scored, offensive touchdowns, points per drive and total offensive DVOA at Football Outsiders.

After Sarkisian's hire, the team's messaging stressed that Atlanta wouldn't overhaul anything — the zone-blocking scheme, the passing attack that earned Ryan the league MVP award, or the "relentless attack" mindset that ultimately cost them a title.

The argument surrounding Ryan's "eliteness" ended in 2016. The veteran was both statistically impressive (4,944 yards, 38 TDs, seven INTs) and a commanding force in two playoff wins. Sarkisian's play-calling tendencies in the college game promoted play-action and no huddle, which jibes with the aspects of Shanahan's system that elevated Ryan's game. Ryan hasn't missed a start since the 2009 season, but Atlanta extended the agreement of backup Matt Schaub, the most reliable No. 2 option the Falcons have had in years.

Freeman was the breakout star of Atlanta's offense last season. Julio Jones is arguably the NFL's best wide receiver if not its most physically impressive. Perhaps more important for Jones (and Ryan) was that the big free-agency price paid for Mohamed Sanu was worth it (59 catches on 81 targets). Jones and Sanu thrived when Ryan consistently hit supporting targets (Freeman, tight end Austin Hooper and breakout sensation Taylor Gabriel), forcing defenses to avoid bracket and double coverage.

Sarkisian's burden will be to continue to spread out targets in his play calls as well as Shanahan did. Sanu and Jones are known quantities, but Gabriel, Hooper, Justin Hardy and re-signed tight end Levine Toilolo have to prove they weren't merely system successes.

Of all the gaudy stats during the Super Bowl run, the most important might've been that Atlanta was the only team in the NFL to have all five offensive linemen start in all 16 regular season games. That's seemingly unlikely to happen again in 2017. Right guard Chris Chester retired, and depth in the interior could be an issue as the year wears on.

DEFENSE Quinn fired defensive coordinator Richard Smith and promoted Marquand Manuel after the Super Bowl collapse.

Nowhere has the Quinn era created more change than in the front seven. Atlanta again shed old bodies during the offseason and again drafted with a focus on defensive speed and versatility. First-round pick Takk McKinley will become a pass-rushing complement to Beasley, who led the league in sacks (15.5) last season. Run stuffer Dontari Poe was a literally massive signing in free agency. The emergence of rookie tackle Grady Jarrett was a surprise in '16.

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/CHAIRMAN: Arthur Blank
PRESIDENT/CEO: Rich McKay
GENERAL MANAGER: Thomas Dimitroff
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER: Scott Pioli
STADIUM: Mercedes-Benz Stadium (71,000)
SURFACE: GreenFields MX 3-STAR Turf System
WEBSITE: www.atlantafalcons.com
TICKETS: 1-404-223-8000
TRAINING CAMP: Atlanta Falcons Training Facility (Flowery Branch, Ga.)

THE COACHES

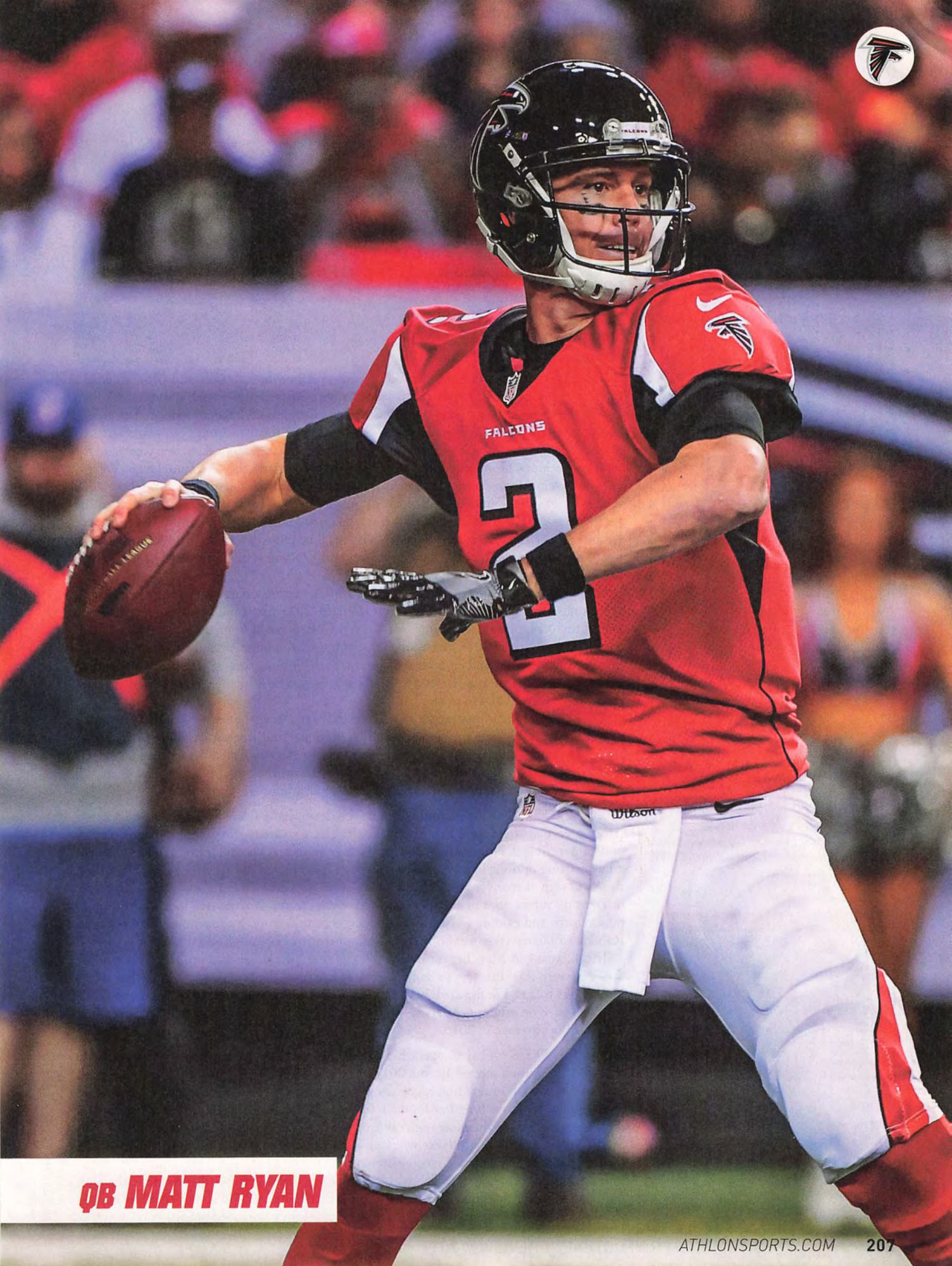
HEAD COACH: Dan Quinn
RECORD WITH TEAM: 19–13
CAREER RECORD: 19–13
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Steve Sarkisian
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Marquand Manuel
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Keith Armstrong
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/WIDE RECEIVERS: Raheem Morris
QUARTERBACKS: Bush Hamdan
RUNNING BACKS: Keith Carter
TIGHT ENDS: Wade Harman
OFFENSIVE LINE: Chris Morgan
DEFENSIVE LINE: Bryant Young
LINEBACKERS: Jeff Ulbrich
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Doug Mallory

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	at Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Sept. 17	Green Bay	8:30	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Sept. 24	at Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Oct. 1	Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
BYE							
Oct. 15	Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Oct. 22	at New England	8:30	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Oct. 29	at N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Nov. 5	at Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Nov. 12	Dallas	4:25	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Nov. 20	at Seattle	8:30	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Nov. 26	Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Dec. 3	Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Dec. 7	New Orleans (Thu.)	8:25	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Dec. 18	at Tampa Bay (Mon.)	8:30	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Dec. 24	at New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Dec. 31	Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports



QB MATT RYAN

2016 RESULTS (11-5)

Sept. 11	Tampa Bay	L	24-31
Sept. 18	at Oakland	W	35-28
Sept. 26	at New Orleans	W	45-32
Oct. 2	Carolina	W	48-33
Oct. 9	at Denver	W	23-16
Oct. 16	at Seattle	L	24-26
Oct. 23	L.A. Chargers (ot)	L	30-33
Oct. 30	Green Bay	W	33-32
Nov. 3	at Tampa Bay	W	43-28
Nov. 13	at Philadelphia	L	15-24
Nov. 27	Arizona	W	38-19
Dec. 4	Kansas City	L	28-29
Dec. 11	at L.A. Rams	W	42-14
Dec. 18	San Francisco	W	41-13
Dec. 24	at Carolina	W	33-16
Jan. 1	New Orleans	W	38-32
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 14	Seattle	W	36-20
Jan. 22	Green Bay	W	44-21
Feb. 5	New England (ot)	L	28-34

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Matt Ryan	534	373	4,944	38	7
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Devonta Freeman	227	1,079	4.8	11	
Tevin Coleman	118	520	4.4	8	
Terron Ward	31	151	4.9	0	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Julio Jones	83	1,409	17.0	6	
Mohamed Sanu	59	653	11.1	4	
Devonta Freeman	54	462	8.6	2	
Taylor Gabriel	35	579	16.5	6	
Tevin Coleman	31	421	13.6	3	
Jacob Tamme	22	210	9.5	3	

KICKING: Matt Bryant, 34-37 FGs, 56-57 PAT, 158 points
TACKLES: Deion Jones, 108; Keanu Neal, 106
SACKS: Vic Beasley, 15.5; Adrian Clayborn, 4.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Deion Jones, 3; Three players tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	415.8	2	2
Rushing	120.5	5	3
Passing	295.3	3	3
Scoring	33.8	1	1
Third Down %	42.1	11	7
Punt Returns	11.4	5	4
Kick Returns	21.0	21	11

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	371.2	25	13
Rushing	104.5	17	10
Passing	266.7	28	13
Scoring	25.4	27	14
Interceptions	12	T18	9
Sacks	34	T16	T11
Turnover Differential	+11	T4	T1

JULIO JONES

The Falcons must continue to develop a pass rush beyond Beasley and contend with a division that's spent 2017 trying to balance its elite quarterbacks with big runners (Adrian Peterson to New Orleans, Christian McCaffery to Carolina). McKinley will almost certainly start if veteran Dwight Freeney doesn't re-sign late in the offseason.

The Atlanta linebacker corps was most in need of Seattle-ization three years ago, and the project continues. Gone are workmanlike Paul Worrilow and the oft-injured Sean Weatherspoon. Deion Jones became a breakout playmaker as a rookie, and he and fellow 2016 rookie De'Vondre Campbell will anchor a much faster, more versatile unit than anything the Falcons have fielded in the Ryan era. Campbell and Jones were exposed at times last season transitioning from run to pass. Now they'll be joined by Kemal Ishmael, moving to linebacker from safety. In the variety of packages Quinn's system employs, Ishmael could become an ideal tweener in the open field.

Desmond Trufant signed a $68.75 million contract extension in April, and before a Week 9 pectoral injury sidelined him for the season, the 2013 first-round pick was emerging as one of the NFL's best shutdown corners. Jalen Collins could flourish as a complementary corner. Keanu Neal, a 2016 first-round pick, emerged as a huge hitter, living up to comparisons to Earl Thomas and embodying Quinn's Seattle ethos. Brian Poole was an undrafted free agent who became a starter at nickel back, where he'll likely stay and compete with converted receiver C.J. Goodwin.

The Falcons' fourth quarter vs. New England was a snapshot of what this very young defense must improve upon — depth and disruption. Another year has allowed Quinn to stock personnel better suited to his signature Cover 3, but the Falcons lived and ultimately died by the variety of pressures they could create up front. The Super Bowl Seahawks are still the blueprint, and Quinn is a little bit closer to replicating that personnel.

SPECIALISTS For the second consecutive season, the Falcons will have to find a new return specialist after losing Eric Weems to the Titans in free agency. Weems handled every punt and most kick returns last season, replacing the ageless Devin Hester. The Falcons have a few existing options in second-year wideout Devin Fuller and receiver Justin Hardy, but they also signed receiver Andre Roberts to a one-year deal. Roberts was a rotation player in Detroit's offense but mainly saw work on special teams, scoring two touchdowns on 20 punt returns and gaining 747 yards on 33 kickoff returns, good for fourth best in the league. Roberts will likely take over both kicks and punts with Hardy as a second option.

The 42-year-old Matt Bryant is as automatic of a placekicker as a pro franchise can ask for. A 58-yard miss in a loss to San Diego may have cost the team a win, but Bryant seems impervious to age. He finished 2016 by connecting on 91.9 percent of his field goals, and he was 6-of-8 on attempts of 50 or more yards. Punter Matt Bosher notched a career-best 41.6-yard net average in 2016.

FINAL ANALYSIS Had an overachieving offense and very young defense not made it to Houston in Quinn's second season, 2017's narrative would be a total positive: the league's best offense and an improving, aggressive defense set to open a billion-dollar stadium with an engaging, explosive brand of football. Instead, Atlanta flew too close to the sun, and its flaws were exposed in the most noticeable manner possible. Now Quinn has to assume that Shanahan's record-setting offense will logically regress to some degree, and to compensate, the defense will have improve its consistency.

If the Falcons can move past February's devastation, they'll discover they're still in the hunt for a Super Bowl win. If they make it back to the final Sunday, it will almost certainly happen thanks to a slightly less explosive offense and a considerably improved defense.

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN FALCONS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
2 Ryan, Matt	QB	6-4	217	9	Boston College	D1a-08	D1a-Atl-08
8 Schaub, Matt	QB	6-6	245	13	Virginia	FA-16	D3-Atl-04
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
40 Coleman, Derrick	FB	6-0	233	3	UCLA	FA-17	FA-Min-12
26 Coleman, Tevin	RB	6-1	210	2	Indiana	D3-15	D3-Atl-15
24 Freeman, Devonta	RB	5-8	206	3	Florida State	D4a-14	D4a-Atl-14
43 Vainuku, Soma	FB	6-0	255	1	USC	FA-17	FA-Hou-16
28 Ward, Terron	RB	5-7	201	2	Oregon State	FA-15	FA-Atl-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
16 Dable, Anthony	WR	6-4	220	1	None	FA-17	FA-NYG-16
13 Daniels, B.J.	WR	5-11	217	3	South Florida	FA-16	D7-SF-13
87 Fuller, Devin	WR	6-0	194	1	UCLA	D7-16	D7-Atl-16
18 Gabriel, Taylor	WR	5-8	165	3	Abilene Christian	W-Cle-16	FA-Cle-14
49 Griswold, Darion	TE	6-5	265	1	Arkansas State	FA-16	FA-Ind-16
16 Hardy, Justin	WR	5-10	192	2	East Carolina	D4-15	D4-Atl-15
81 Hooper, Austin	TE	6-3	254	1	Stanford	D3-16	D3-Atl-16
11 Jones, Julio	WR	6-3	220	6	Alabama	D1-11	D1-Atl-11
82 Perkins, Joshua	TE	6-3	223	1	Washington	FA-16	FA-Atl-16
19 Roberts, Andre	WR	5-11	192	7	Citadel	FA-Det-17	D3-Ari-10
12 Sanu, Mohamed	WR	6-2	210	5	Rutgers	FA-Cin-16	D3-Cin-12
89 Scantling, Garrett	WR	6-3	205	1	Georgia	FA-17	FA-Atl-17
86 Tialavea, D.J.	TE	6-4	260	3	Utah State	FA-16	FA-Jac-14
80 Toilolo, Levine	TE	6-8	265	4	Stanford	D4b-13	D4b-Atl-13
15 Williams, Nick	WR	5-10	184	3	Connecticut	FA-16	FA-Was-13
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
61 Bykowski, Carter	T	6-7	313	3	Iowa State	FA-16	D7-SF-13
79 Freeman, Will	T	6-6	300	R	Southern Miss	FA-17	FA-Atl-17
63 Garland, Ben	C/G	6-5	308	3	Air Force	FA-15	FA-Den-10
66 Graf, Kevin	OL	6-6	309	1	USC	FA-16	FA-Phi-14
67 Levitre, Andy	G	6-2	303	8	Oregon State	T-Ten-15	D2-Buf-09
51 Mack, Alex	C	6-4	311	8	California	FA-Cle-16	D1-Cle-09
70 Matthews, Jake	T	6-5	309	3	Texas A&M	D1-14	D1-Atl-14
73 Schraeder, Ryan	T	6-7	300	4	Valdosta State	FA-13	FA-Atl-13
71 Schweitzer, Wes	G	6-4	300	1	San Jose State	D6-16	D6-Atl-16
72 Thornton, Hugh	G	6-3	320	4	Illinois	FA-Ind-17	D3-Ind-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
44 Beasley Jr., Vic	DE	6-3	246	2	Clemson	D1-15	D1-Atl-15
99 Clayborn, Adrian	DT	6-3	280	6	Iowa	FA-15	D1-TB-11
95 Crawford, Jack	DE	6-5	288	5	Penn State	FA-Dal-17	D6-Oak-12
77 Hageman, Ra'Shede	DT	6-6	318	3	Minnesota	D2-14	D2-Atl-14
97 Jarrett, Grady	DT	6-0	305	2	Clemson	D5-15	D5-Atl-15
74 Mayes, Chris	NT	6-4	323	1	Georgia	FA-16	FA-Atl-16
92 Poe, Dontari	DT	6-3	346	5	Memphis	FA-KC-17	D1-KC-12
50 Reed, Brooks	DE	6-3	254	6	Arizona	FA-15	D2a-Hou-11
90 Shelby, Derrick	DT	6-2	280	5	Utah	FA-Mia-16	FA-Mia-12
91 Upshaw, Courtney	DT	6-2	272	5	Alabama	FA-Bal-16	D2a-Bal-12
92 Vellano, Joe	DT	6-2	300	3	Maryland	FA-16	FA-NE-13
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
59 Campbell, De'Vondre	LB	6-3	234	1	Minnesota	D4-16	D4-Atl-16
54 English, Darius	LB	6-6	245	R	South Carolina	FA-17	FA-Atl-17
36 Ishmael, Kemal	LB	6-0	206	4	UCF	D7a-13	D7a-Atl-13
45 Jones, Deion	LB	6-1	222	1	LSU	D2-16	D2-Atl-16
52 Keyes, Josh	LB	6-2	227	1	Boston College	FA-16	FA-TB-15
53 Reynolds, LaRoy	LB	6-1	240	4	Virginia	FA-Chi-16	FA-Jac-13
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
23 Alford, Robert	CB	5-10	186	4	SE Louisiana	D2-13	D2-Atl-13
37 Allen, Ricardo	S	5-9	186	2	Purdue	D5a-14	D5a-Atl-14
32 Collins, Jalen	CB	6-1	203	2	LSU	D2-15	D2-Atl-15
29 Goodwin, C.J.	CB	6-4	220	1	California (PA)	FA-15	FA-Pit-14
25 King, Akeem	CB	6-1	212	2	San Jose State	D7b-15	D7b-Atl-15
22 Neal, Keanu	S	6-0	211	1	Florida	D1-16	D1-Atl-16
20 Neasman, Sharrod	S	5-11	213	1	Florida Atlantic	FA-16	FA-Atl-16
30 Olatoye, Deji	CB	6-1	205	1	North Carolina A&T	FA-16	FA-Bal-14
34 Poole, Brian	CB	5-9	213	1	Florida	FA-16	FA-Atl-16
27 Therezie, Robenson	S	5-9	212	2	Auburn	FA-15	FA-Atl-15
21 Trufant, Desmond	CB	6-0	190	4	Washington	D1-13	D1-Atl-13
38 Wreh-Wilson, Blidi	CB	6-1	190	4	Connecticut	FA-16	D3-Ten-13
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
5 Bosher, Matt	P	6-0	208	6	Miami	D6-11	D6-Atl-11
3 Bryant, Matt	K	5-9	203	15	Baylor	FA-09	FA-NYG-02
47 Harris, Josh	LS	6-1	240	5	Auburn	FA-12	FA-Atl-12
6 Meyer, Mike	K	6-2	190	1	Iowa	FA-17	FA-Ten-15

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	11	Julio Jones	14	Justin Hardy
WR	12	Mohamed Sanu	18	Taylor Gabriel
LT	70	Jake Matthews	79	Will Freeman
LG	67	Andy Levitre	64	Sean Harlow (R)
C	51	Alex Mack	63	Ben Garland
RG	71	Wes Schweitzer	72	Hugh Thornton
RT	73	Ryan Schraeder	66	Kevin Graf
TE	81	Austin Hooper	80	Levine Toilolo
QB	2	Matt Ryan	8	Matt Schaub
RB	24	Devonta Freeman	26	Tevin Coleman
FB	40	Derrick Coleman	38	Brian Hill (R)

DEFENSE

DE	98	Takk McKinley (R)	50	Brooks Reed
DT	92	Dontari Poe	99	Adrian Clayborn
DT	97	Grady Jarrett	90	Derrick Shelby
DE	44	Vic Beasley	95	Jack Crawford
SLB	59	De'Vondre Campbell	54	Darius English
MLB	45	Deion Jones	53	LaRoy Reynolds
WLB	42	Duke Riley (R)	36	Kemal Ishmael
CB	32	Jalen Collins	23	Robert Alford
CB	21	Desmond Trufant	29	C.J. Goodwin
SS	22	Keanu Neal	27	Damontae Kazee (R)
FS	37	Ricardo Allen	25	Akeem King

SPECIALISTS

K	3	Matt Bryant	KR	19	Andre Roberts
P	5	Matt Bosher	PR	19	Andre Roberts

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
FB	Derrick Coleman	Seattle
DE	Jack Crawford	Dallas
DL	Dontari Poe	Kansas City
KR	Andre Roberts	Detroit
OL	Hugh Thornton	Indianapolis
CB	Blidi Wreh-Wilson	Tennessee

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
DT	Jonathan Babineaux	Free Agent
OG	Chris Chester	Retried
FB	Patrick DiMarco	Buffalo
DE	Dwight Freeney	Free Agent
DE	Tyson Jackson	Free Agent
WR	Aldrick Robinson	San Francisco
TE	Jacob Tamme	Free Agent
LB	Sean Weatherspoon	Free Agent
WR	Eric Weems	Tennessee
LB	Philip Wheeler	Free Agent
LB	Paul Worrilow	Detroit

SCOUTING THE FALCONS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP ATLANTA "The Falcons proved that they are capable of winning a Super Bowl with Matt Ryan as the quarterback. ... The signing of center Alex Mack was significant, because he set the bottom of the pocket and consistently provided openings for Devonta Freeman, who had a spectacular season. ... Julio Jones is simply one of the best players in the entire league and proved to be almost indefensible when he is healthy. ... The offensive coordinator change will be interesting to follow as Dan Quinn tabbed Steve Sarkisian as his new play caller to replace Kyle Shanahan. ... Quinn has changed the mentality of the Falcons' defense, and defensive tackle Grady Jarrett is a part of that equation. ... He's being counted on to produce at a high level in 2017 in combination with free-agent signing Dontari Poe (Chiefs). ... Vic Beasley can flash major potential, but he is more finesse than physical as a run defender and pass rusher, and they moved up in the draft to select UCLA's Takk McKinley. ... Linebacker Deion Jones was sensational in his rookie season and should continue to excel in this scheme. ... ... The Falcons re-upped with both of their homegrown corners in Desmond Trufant and Robert Alford, but truthfully, neither jumps to mind as a top-shelf cover guy. ... The mental challenge of coming back from the most difficult of Super Bowl defeats is going to be Atlanta's biggest test, but Quinn and Ryan are both wired to respond and lead this team back to the playoffs."

FALCONS IN THE *DRAFT* B-

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Takkarist McKinley	DE	6-4	230	UCLA
3.	Duke Riley	LB	6-1	230	LSU
4.	Sean Harlow	OG	6-4	303	Oregon State
5.	Damontae Kazee	CB	5-10	184	San Diego State
5.	Brian Hill	RB	6-1	219	Wyoming
5.	Eric Saubert	TE	6-5	253	Drake

Dan Quinn's emphasis on overhauling the Mike Smith-era defense continues into 2017. Takk McKinley becomes the pass-rush bookend for Vic Beasley, allowing for more exotic sub-packages on third down. McKinley emerged as one of the top defensive playmakers in college football as a senior at UCLA. Duke Riley has speed and was a team captain at LSU, two things the Falcons have targeted in recent drafts. Sean Harlow filled one of Atlanta's few immediate needs after the retirement of Chris Chester. Brian Hill won't unseat Devonta Freeman or Tevin Coleman in the backfield but adds depth and could become a potential late-game closer. Eric Saubert is extremely raw as a pass catcher but has enough athleticism to become a long-term project.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

A BRAND NEW BENZ The Falcons will start the 2017 season in their brand new home, Mercedes Benz Stadium, which they'll share with MLS team Atlanta United. The Stadium will be one of the most cutting-edge facilities in sports, but its price has climbed to an estimated $1.6 billion, thanks in large part to a retractable roof made of eight different moving panels.

CHEAP POOLE Several rookie and second-year players emerged as defensive anchors for the Falcons, but no one thought 2016 undrafted rookie Brian Poole would turn out to be so valuable. Poole's 59 tackles, one interception and one sack in 19 games earned him $371,873, the league's largest performance-based bonus. Poole even out-earned fellow rookie surprise Dak Prescott.

DID IT FOR THE CULTURE When the Falcons were headed to the Super Bowl, Atlanta rap group Migos had the biggest album in the U.S. Julio Jones paid homage to Migos by wearing their album art on his cleats. Migos returned the favor by creating "11 Birds," a theme song for Jones and the Falcons.

PADDLE DISCIPLINE After 2016, Dan Quinn's offseason focus was on roster camaraderie. Among many planned trips and exercises to promote chemistry and bonding, Quinn had ping pong tables installed in the Falcons' locker room. Now the team holds ongoing tournaments, and Matt Ryan and Jones have taken a backseat to practice squad tight end D.J. Tialavea, considered the team's ping pong ringer.

DECATHLETIC POTENTIAL While he's not expected to break into the current wide receivers rotation, former University of Georgia track star Garrett Scantling has signed with the Falcons to train as a potential wideout. Scantling was an All-America decathlete in college, but he also had more than 1,200 yards receiving during his senior season of high school in Jacksonville, Fla.

FINE HIM LATER First-round draft pick Takk McKinley made national news on draft night when he carried a framed photo of his grandmother to the stage in Philadelphia. In high school, McKinley had promised his then-dying grandmother that he'd eventually make it to the NFL, and the Richmond, Calif., native made good on his promise. He also happened to drop a few swear words on the NFL Network's live feed, a transgression for which he told reporters, "Fine me later." The league declined to punish him.

UNDRAFTED SECOND ROUNDER The next time you take stock in a mock draft, consider Taylor Gabriel. The undrafted receiver from Abilene Christian caught on with the Browns in 2014 and impressed then-offensive coordinator Kyle Shanahan but was eventually cut. He landed in Atlanta, where he promptly tied Jones for the team lead in receiving TDs, averaging 42.7 yards per touchdown catch. Gabriel is now a fan favorite and signed a one-year tender in 2017 that comps the unlikely NFL standout as a second rounder. Gabriel, however, is not even the biggest UDFA hit in the locker room: Former undrafted tackle Ryan Schraeder overperformed so well he ended up with a $31.5 million contract.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

9.1 The Falcons' defense allowed a league-high 9.1 receptions and 53.5 yards per game on passes to running backs.

34.9 The Atlanta offense scored a touchdown on a league-leading 34.9 percent of its drives.

26 The Falcons led the NFL by throwing play-action passes on 26 percent of their dropbacks and finished second with an average of 10.4 yards per play on those passes.

DEVONTA FREEMAN

McKinley: Peter Brouillet; Freeman: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

CAROLINA PANTHERS

NFC SOUTH FORECAST

2

Their climb was rapid. Their fall was even steeper.

Now, the Carolina Panthers find themselves at the base of the NFL mountain once again, trying to secure a foothold with a "Greatest Hits" mix of old and new players.

The "old" is not that old, but quarterback Cam Newton turned 28 in May and will be entering his seventh NFL season. Newton took a couple of steps backward in 2016, suffering a career low in completion percentage as the Panthers stumbled to a 6–10 record after making the Super Bowl with a 15–1 team the year before. Besides the inherent pressure of attempting to return to his Most Valuable Player form of 2015, Newton has the additional burden of coming back from March surgery on the partially torn rotator cuff in his throwing shoulder.

On the other hand, he will have more weapons on an offense that too often looked stale and slow in 2016. Dynamic rookies Christian McCaffrey and Curtis Samuel will get on the field quickly as the Panthers try to insert more speed and elusiveness.

The Panthers do have a few advantages that could lead to a bounce-back season. Their schedule is slightly easier in 2017, and they have acquired a couple of veterans who played in Charlotte before and should fit right in again in defensive end Julius Peppers and cornerback Captain Munnerlyn. Left tackle Matt Kalil became the most expensive — and the riskiest — free-agent gamble in Carolina history when he joined brother Ryan on the Panthers in a five-year, $55.5 million contract. The Kalil deal could ultimately make or break the career of Panthers general manager Dave Gettleman, who knows that both he and coach Ron Rivera need to avoid two disappointing seasons in a row because "our butts are on the line every year," as Gettleman puts it.

OFFENSE Score more points. This has become the Panthers' offseason mantra after the offense was average at best in 2016 and failed time and again in the clutch. After a 2015 season in which Carolina finished No. 1 in the NFL in scoring (31.3 ppg), the Panthers dropped to 15th in 2016 (23.1 ppg). And given that Carolina lost six games by three points or fewer, the goal this year is to once again top the 30-points-per-game threshold.

The Panthers had what they called a "position catastrophe" on the offensive line last season, and in the season finale they had four players playing out of position. They are trying to avoid that in 2017 partly by throwing huge money at Matt Kalil — a contract that shocked many because of its sheer size — to protect Newton's blind side. Michael Oher was limited to three games last season due to injuries and severe concussion-related symptoms. While Oher would be the Panthers' first choice to be the right tackle, veteran Daryl Williams was decent last season in a battlefield promotion and can play both tackle spots. Second-round draft pick Taylor Moton has the size needed and also could be a factor. Center Ryan Kalil will call the shots for the line as usual and tease his younger brother as warranted. Guards Trai Turner and Andrew Norwell are solid run blockers.

At running back, bruiser Jonathan Stewart returns but is nearing the twilight of his career at age 30 and in his 10th year in the NFL. McCaffrey, the heir apparent, is a far different type of back who is more elusive and better in space but not as effective in between the tackles. Fullback Mike Tolbert was released as the Panthers plan to go more to three-wide sets and let their new slot receiver, rookie Curtis Samuel, run a lot of the deep routes that Ted Ginn Jr. used to before he bolted for New Orleans.

Wide receiver Kelvin Benjamin has not been able to achieve the separation he needs to from defensive backs, and his on-and-off battles with weight are part of the problem. He has a lot to prove this season. Tight end Greg Olsen is a consummate pro and has made the Pro Bowl three years in a row. His sticky hands have made him Newton's favorite target. Devin Funchess has been a poor

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/FOUNDER: Jerry Richardson
GENERAL MANAGER: Dave Gettleman
ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER: Brandon Beane
STADIUM: Bank of America Stadium (75,419)
SURFACE: Hybrid Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.panthers.com
TICKETS: 1-704-358-7800
TRAINING CAMP: Wofford College (Spartanburg, S.C.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Ron Rivera
RECORD WITH TEAM: 53–42–1
CAREER RECORD: 53–42–1
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Mike Shula
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Steve Wilks
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Thomas McGaughey
RUNNING GAME COORDINATOR: John Matsko
QUARTERBACKS: Ken Dorsey
RUNNING BACKS: Jim Skipper
WIDE RECEIVERS: Lance Taylor
TIGHT ENDS: Pete Hoener
OFFENSIVE LINE: Ray Brown
DEFENSIVE LINE: Eric Washington
LINEBACKERS: Al Holcomb
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Curtis Fuller

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	at San Francisco	4:25	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Sept. 17	Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Sept. 24	New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Oct. 1	at New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Oct. 8	at Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Oct. 12	Philadelphia (Thu.)	8:25	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Oct. 22	at Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Oct. 29	at Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Nov. 5	Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Nov. 13	Miami (Mon.)	8:30	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
BYE							
Nov. 26	at N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Dec. 3	at New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Dec. 10	Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Dec. 17	Green Bay	1:00	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Dec. 24	Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Dec. 31	at Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)

QB CAM NEWTON

2016 RESULTS (6-10)

Sept. 8	at Denver	L	20-21
Sept. 18	San Francisco	W	46-27
Sept. 25	Minnesota	L	10-22
Oct. 2	at Atlanta	L	33-48
Oct. 10	Tampa Bay	L	14-17
Oct. 16	at New Orleans	L	38-41
Oct. 30	Arizona	W	30-20
Nov. 6	at L.A. Rams	W	13-10
Nov. 13	Kansas City	L	17-20
Nov. 17	New Orleans	W	23-20
Nov. 27	at Oakland	L	32-35
Dec. 4	at Seattle	L	7-40
Dec. 11	L.A. Chargers	W	28-16
Dec. 19	at Washington	W	26-15
Dec. 24	Atlanta	L	16-33
Jan. 1	at Tampa Bay	L	16-17

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

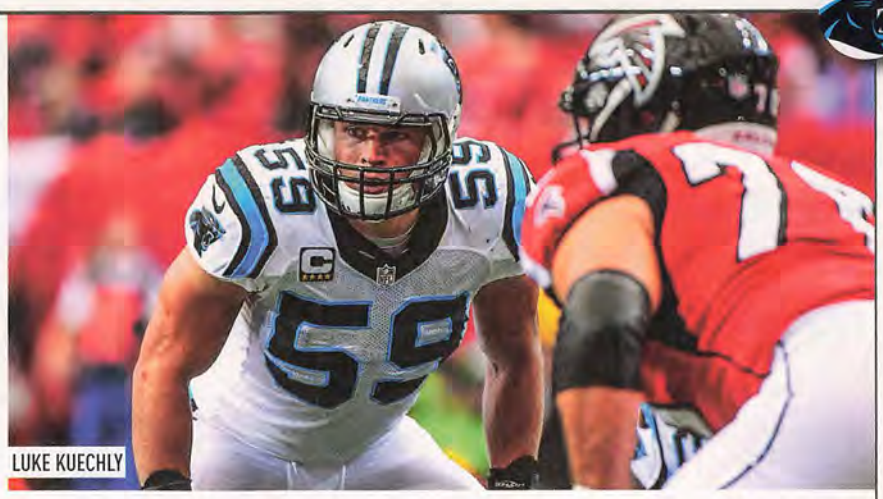
PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Cam Newton	510	270	3,509	19	14
Derek Anderson	53	36	453	2	5
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Jonathan Stewart	218	824	3.8	9	
Cam Newton	90	359	4.0	5	
Fozzy Whittaker	57	265	4.6	0	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Greg Olsen	80	1,073	13.4	3	
Kelvin Benjamin	63	941	14.9	7	
Ted Ginn	54	752	13.9	4	
Corey Brown	27	276	10.2	1	
Fozzy Whittaker	25	226	9.0	0	

KICKING: Graham Gano, 30-38 FGs, 31-34 PAT, 121 points
TACKLES: Thomas Davis, 106; Luke Kuechly, 102
SACKS: Mario Addison, 9.5; Kawann Short, 6.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Kurt Coleman, 4; Thomas Davis, 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	343.7	19	10
Rushing	113.4	10	4
Passing	230.3	T21	12
Scoring	23.1	15	7
Third Down %	37.2	23	13
Punt Returns	7.0	24	14
Kick Returns	22.4	14	7

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	359.8	21	10
Rushing	91.6	6	3
Passing	268.2	29	14
Scoring	25.1	26	13
Interceptions	17	T4	T1
Sacks	47	2	2
Turnover Differential	-2	T21	T11


LUKE KUECHLY

man's version of Benjamin, which is not a compliment. Like Benjamin, Funchess badly needs to show improvement in 2017. Damiere Byrd is undersized but very fast and could surprise.

DEFENSE Although the defensive numbers weren't particularly impressive last season, less has been done to this unit than to the offense. The thinking is that any team with Pro Bowl linebackers Luke Kuechly and Thomas Davis in the middle is already off to a very good start. And the Panthers did finish No. 2 in the NFL last season with 47 sacks, although they were well distributed, and no one had more than defensive end Mario Addison's 9.5.

Defensive coordinator Sean McDermott has departed for the head job in Buffalo. New coordinator Steve Wilks was the secondary coach and has long been considered the heir to the job. Don't expect much to change.

He will have some "gently used" toys to play with, though. Peppers makes a popular return at defensive end at age 37, with the Panthers hoping he can squeeze at least another year and five to eight more sacks out of a body that first entered the NFL in 2002 with Carolina. Munnerlyn returns as the nickel corner, where Carolina too often got beaten last season by the pass-happy offenses of the NFC South. And Mike Adams comes aboard to likely start at strong safety at age 36, having made two Pro Bowls in the past three years. His arrival will allow ball hawk Kurt Coleman (11 interceptions over the past two seasons) to move to his more natural position of free safety.

The Panthers have invested a lot of time and money on their defensive front. Kawann Short was the biggest investment, as Carolina gave him a whopping five-year, $80 million deal in the offseason to lock up one of the best pass-rushing tackles in the NFL. Charles Johnson is nearing the end of his career and doesn't have the burst he once did but is still a force against the run. Addison is a speed rusher who wants to be known as a complete player. Peppers' role will be situational and depend on how much he seems to have left.

Strong-side linebacker Shaq Thompson has become a decent player who is overshadowed by teammates Kuechly and Davis. But the Panthers' next big defensive star could be cornerback James Bradberry, who steadily improved as a rookie and enters his second season as the closest thing to a true cover corner that the Panthers have.

Carolina's secondary was torched repeatedly in the first part of 2016 as it tried to make up for the loss of Josh Norman on the fly, but Bradberry and fellow 2016 draft pick Daryl Worley both got better as the season progressed. They give the Panthers youth and speed at the corners.

SPECIALISTS One of the biggest training-camp battles will be between incumbent placekicker Graham Gano, who missed eight field goals last year, and seventh-round draft pick Harrison Butker. Punter Andy Lee was having a terrific year in 2016 until he had a season-ending hamstring injury.

McCaffrey will start out as the No. 1 punt returner, but the Panthers don't plan to use him on kickoffs for now. Samuel might be a factor on kickoffs if he can beat out Fozzy Whittaker.

FINAL ANALYSIS Despite all the changes, the key to it all is Newton. The quarterback has to have better mechanics. He has to use his new weapons effectively. He has to get rid of the ball quicker. He has to will the Panthers to some wins in the fourth quarter.

Carolina has surrounded Newton with a good team, but it will be great only if he can ascend to somewhere near the level he played throughout 2015 prior to the Super Bowl. If he cannot, Carolina will linger around .500 once again.

Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

2017 VETERAN PANTHERS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
3 Anderson, Derek	QB	6-6	235	12	Oregon State	FA-11	D6-Bal-05
4 Gilbert, Garrett	QB	6-4	230	1	SMU	FA-17	D6-LAR-14
1 Newton, Cam	QB	6-5	245	6	Auburn	D1-11	D1-Car-11
14 Webb, Joe	QB	6-4	235	7	UAB	FA-Min-14	D6-Min-10
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
34 Artis-Payne, Cameron	RB	5-10	220	2	Auburn	D5b-15	D5b-Car-15
38 Simmons, Jalen	RB	5-8	210	1	South Carolina St.	FA-16	FA-Car-16
28 Stewart, Jonathan	RB	5-10	240	9	Oregon	D1a-08	D1a-Car-08
43 Whittaker, Fozzy	RB	5-10	205	4	Texas	FA-14	FA-Ari-12
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
13 Benjamin, Kelvin	WR	6-5	245	3	Florida State	D1-14	D1-Car-14
11 Bersin, Brenton	WR	6-3	210	3	Wofford	FA-13	FA-Car-12
18 Byrd, Damiere	WR	5-9	180	1	South Carolina	FA-15	FA-Car-15
84 Dickson, Ed	TE	6-4	255	7	Oregon	FA-Bal-14	D3-Bal-10
81 Frazier, Mose	WR	5-11	190	1	Memphis	FA-17	FA-Den-16
17 Funchess, Devin	WR	6-4	225	2	Michigan	D2-15	D2-Car-15
15 Garrett, Keyarris	WR	6-3	215	1	Tulsa	FA-16	FA-Car-16
12 Johnson, Charles	WR	6-2	217	4	Grand Valley State	FA-Min-17	D7-GB-13
82 Manhertz, Chris	TE	6-6	255	1	Canisius	W-NO-16	FA-Buf-14
88 Olsen, Greg	TE	6-5	255	10	Miami	T-Chi-11	D1-Chi-07
19 Shepard, Russell	WR	6-1	195	4	LSU	FA-TB-17	FA-Phi-13
80 Simonson, Scott	TE	6-5	255	2	Assumption	FA-15	FA-Oak-14
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
76 Clausell, Blaine	T	6-6	320	1	Mississippi State	FA-16	FA-Bal-15
71 France, Dan	T	6-6	315	1	Michigan State	FA-16	FA-Cin-14
66 Gradkowski, Gino	C	6-3	300	5	Delaware	FA-Atl-16	D4-Bal-12
75 Kalil, Matt	T	6-7	317	5	USC	FA-Min-17	D1a-Min-12
67 Kalil, Ryan	C	6-2	300	10	USC	D2b-07	D2b-Car-07
69 Larsen, Tyler	G	6-4	335	1	Utah State	FA-16	FA-Mia-14
68 Norwell, Andrew	G	6-6	325	3	Ohio State	FA-14	FA-Car-14
73 Oher, Michael	T	6-4	315	8	Ole Miss	FA-15	D1-Bal-09
79 Scott, Chris	G	6-4	340	5	Tennessee	FA-14	D5-Pit-10
65 Silatolu, Amini	G	6-4	320	4	Midwestern State	FA-17	D2-Car-12
63 Slater, Pearce	T	6-7	335	1	San Diego State	FA-16	FA-Jac-16
78 Thompson, Tyrus	T	6-5	330	1	Oklahoma	FA-16	D6-Min-15
70 Turner, Trai	G	6-3	310	3	LSU	D3-14	D3-Car-14
60 Williams, Daryl	T	6-6	335	2	Oklahoma	D4-15	D4-Car-15
61 Yankey, David	G	6-6	310	2	Stanford	FA-16	D5-Min-14
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
97 Addison, Mario	DE	6-3	260	6	Troy	FA-12	FA-Chi-11
92 Butler, Vernon	DT	6-4	325	1	Louisiana Tech	D1-16	D1-Car-16
72 Crume, Eric	DT	6-0	330	1	Syracuse	FA-16	FA-Jac-15
91 Delaire, Ryan	DE	6-4	265	2	Towson	FA-15	FA-TB-15
96 Horton, Wes	DE	6-5	265	4	USC	FA-16	FA-Car-13
95 Johnson, Charles	DE	6-2	275	10	Georgia	D3-07	D3-Car-07
98 Lotulelei, Star	DT	6-2	315	4	Utah	D1-13	D1-Car-13
93 Love, Kyle	DT	6-1	315	5	Mississippi State	FA-16	FA-NE-10
Moore, Zach	DE	6-6	290	2	Concordia-St. Paul	FA-17	FA-NE-14
90 Peppers, Julius	DE	6-7	287	15	North Carolina	FA-GB-17	D1-Car-02
99 Short, Kawann	DT	6-3	315	4	Purdue	D2-13	D2-Car-13
75 Webster, Larry	DE	6-6	275	2	Bloomsburg	FA-16	D4-Det-14
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
57 Cash, Jeremy	LB	6-0	215	1	Duke	FA-16	FA-Car-16
58 Davis, Thomas	LB	6-1	235	12	Georgia	D1-05	D1-Car-05
53 Jacobs, Ben	LB	6-4	240	4	Fresno State	FA-16	FA-Cle-11
59 Kuechly, Luke	LB	6-3	238	5	Boston College	D1-12	D1-Car-12
55 Mayo, David	LB	6-2	245	2	Texas State	D5a-15	D5a-Car-15
52 Norris, Jared	LB	6-1	240	1	Utah	FA-16	FA-Car-16
54 Thompson, Shaq	LB	6-0	230	2	Washington	D1-15	D1-Car-15
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
27 Adams, Mike	S	5-11	205	13	Delaware	FA-Ind-17	FA-SF-04
45 Blechen, Brian	S	6-2	230	1	Utah	FA-17	FA-Car-15
24 Bradberry, James	CB	6-1	210	1	Samford	D2-16	D2-Car-16
20 Coleman, Kurt	S	5-11	200	7	Ohio State	FA-KC-15	D7-Phi-10
30 Dixon, Travell	S	6-1	210	1	Washington	FA-16	FA-Oak-15
42 Jones, Colin	S	6-0	205	6	TCU	T-SF-12	D6b-SF-11
29 Marlowe, Dean	S	6-1	210	2	James Madison	FA-15	FA-Car-15
23 McCray, L.J.	S	6-0	210	2	Catawba	FA-17	FA-SF-14
41 Munnerlyn, Captain	CB	5-9	195	7	South Carolina	FA-Min-17	D7-Car-09
39 Richards, Jeff	CB	6-2	200	1	Emporia State	FA-17	FA-Car-17
31 Sanchez, Zack	CB	5-11	185	1	Oklahoma	D5-16	D5-Car-16
37 Southward, Dezmen	S	6-2	210	2	Wisconsin	FA-17	D3-Atl-14
21 Williams, Teddy	CB	6-1	210	5	UTSA	FA-15	FA-Dal-10
26 Worley, Daryl	CB	6-1	205	1	West Virginia	D3-16	D3-Car-16
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
9 Gano, Graham	K	6-2	205	7	Florida State	FA-12	FA-Bal-09
44 Jansen, J.J.	LS	6-2	240	9	Notre Dame	T-GB-09	FA-GB-08
8 Lee, Andy	P	6-1	185	13	Pittsburgh	T-Cle-16	D6-SF-04
5 Palardy, Michael	P	5-11	190	1	Tennessee	FA-16	FA-Oak-14

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	13	Kelvin Benjamin	19	Russell Shepard
WR	17	Devin Funchess	12	Charles Johnson
SLOT		Curtis Samuel (R)		
LT	75	Matt Kalil	60	Daryl Williams
LG	68	Andrew Norwell	65	Amini Silatolu
C	67	Ryan Kalil	66	Gino Gradkowski
RG	70	Trai Turner	79	Chris Scott
RT	73	Michael Oher		Taylor Moton (R)
TE	88	Greg Olsen	84	Ed Dickson
QB	1	Cam Newton	3	Derek Anderson
RB	28	Jonathan Stewart	22	Christian McCaffrey (R)

DEFENSE

DE	97	Mario Addison	96	Wes Horton
DT	99	Kawann Short	92	Vernon Butler
DT	98	Star Lotulelei	93	Kyle Love
DE	95	Charles Johnson	90	Julius Peppers
SLB	54	Shaq Thompson	57	Jeremy Cash
MLB	59	Luke Kuechly	55	David Mayo
WLB	58	Thomas Davis	52	Jared Norris
CB	26	Daryl Worley		Corn Elder (R)
CB	24	James Bradberry	41	Captain Munnerlyn
SS	27	Mike Adams	29	Dean Marlowe
FS	20	Kurt Coleman	42	Colin Jones

SPECIALISTS

K	9	Graham Gano	KR	43	Fozzy Whittaker
P	8	Andy Lee	PR	22	Christian McCaffrey (R)

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
SS	Mike Adams	Indianapolis
WR	Charles Johnson	Minnesota
OT	Matt Kalil	Minnesota
CB	Captain Munnerlyn	Minnesota
DE	Julius Peppers	Green Bay
WR	Russell Shepard	Tampa Bay

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
WR	Philly Brown	Buffalo
WR	Ted Ginn Jr.	New Orleans
LB	A.J. Klein	New Orleans
OT	Mike Remmers	Minnesota
FB	Mike Tolbert	Buffalo

SCOUTING THE PANTHERS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP CAROLINA "Ironically enough, the Panthers were second in the NFL in sacks with 47 while finishing 29th in passing yardage allowed. Those two stats alone demonstrate the lack of experience and playmaking ability in the back end of their defense. ... After they literally walked away from Josh Norman and the franchise tag last April, they invested heavily in the draft and selected three rookie corners. James Bradberry and Daryl Worley flashed potential, but it was trial-by-fire for that duo. ... Coach Ron Rivera has already announced that Cam Newton will not be featured and leaned on as a primary ball carrier anymore, so they picked Christian McCaffrey in the first round to complement Jonathan Stewart as a runner and increase Newton's proficiency in the passing game. ... With their power-forward style wide receivers in Kelvin Benjamin and Devin Funchess on the outside and tight end Greg Olsen patrolling the middle, their offensive success really comes down to their line play and Newton's accuracy. Cam hit an alarmingly low 52.9 percent of his passes last year, so McCaffrey and fellow rookie Curtis Samuel should give him two more accessible options. ... Matt Kalil (Vikings) was signed to be the left tackle, but he has been a shadow of himself in recent years. Trai Turner is a standout at right guard, but look for rookie Taylor Moton to win the right tackle job at some point during the season. ... Of course, the real question centers around star linebacker Luke Kuechly, who missed six games with a severe concussion. ... This team must play ball control, shorten the game and protect its young secondary in order to reach the playoffs again."

McCaffrey: Peter Brouillet; Olsen: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

PANTHERS IN THE *DRAFT* B+

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	Christian McCaffrey	RB	5-11	202	Stanford
2.	Curtis Samuel	WR	5-11	196	Ohio State
2.	Taylor Moton	OT	6-5	319	Western Michigan
3.	Daeshon Hall	DE	6-5	266	Texas A&M
5.	Corn Elder	CB	5-10	183	Miami (Fla.)
6.	Alex Armah	FB	6-2	253	West Georgia
7.	Harrison Butker	PK	6-4	199	Georgia Tech

Christian McCaffrey and Curtis Samuel will be plugged in immediately as the Panthers try to get younger, faster and more dynamic on offense. McCaffrey will be a third-down back, spell Jonathan Stewart in the backfield and also return punts. Samuel (4.31 in the 40) will begin as a slot receiver and run a lot of deep routes. Taylor Moton will compete for a starting job at right tackle. The other draft picks will need to contribute on special teams if they are going to get a jersey on game day. Harrison Butker will have a shot at beating out starter Graham Gano, who missed eight field goals in 2016. Daeshon Hall was the "other" defensive end at Texas A&M, teaming with No. 1 overall pick Myles Garrett. Corn Elder was a top high school basketball player before focusing on football at Miami.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

OHER'S TRUCK Taylor Moton, the Panthers' second-round pick, already knew of new teammate Michael Oher long before he met him. Like many football fans, Moton loved the movie "The Blind Side." The story made an impact on his parents, too. "My mom loved it, and she wanted to get me that same truck (a Ford F-150) that Michael Oher had in that movie," Moton said the night the Panthers drafted him in April. "I still have it to this day."

FAMILY TREE Christian McCaffrey's father Ed was a longtime NFL receiver; his mother played soccer at Stanford; his uncle Billy scored 16 points for Duke in the 1991 national championship game; and one of his grandfathers was once known as the "fastest man in the world" in the 1950s and won an Olympic silver medal in the 100 meters in 1960.

SUPER MARIO Cam Newton has a habit of coming up with nicknames for teammates. He has labeled Panthers defensive end Mario Addison "Super Mario." Addison led the Panthers with 9.5 sacks in 2016, earned a new contract with that season and plans to open an enormous auto shop in Alabama that works on old cars when he retires.

SEATTLE OFF DOCKET The Panthers and the Seattle Seahawks have had a strange and jam-packed rivalry the past few years, having played at least once every season since 2012. This season the Panthers and Seahawks are finally off each other's schedules. Carolina made four trips to the West Coast last season but will make only one in 2017 — a Week 1 visit to San Francisco.

OLSEN'S ODYSSEY Greg Olsen is the first tight end in NFL history with three consecutive 1,000-yard receiving seasons. Olsen also finished third in the NFL for the Walter Payton Man of the Year award last season due to his charitable work.

CAM'S DAUGHTER Never let it be said that Newton and his longtime girlfriend Kia Proctor choose ordinary names for their children. They named their son Chosen when he was born in late 2015. Then, when their daughter was born in early 2017, they named her Sovereign-Dior Cambella Newton. Newton announced the name in an Instagram post.

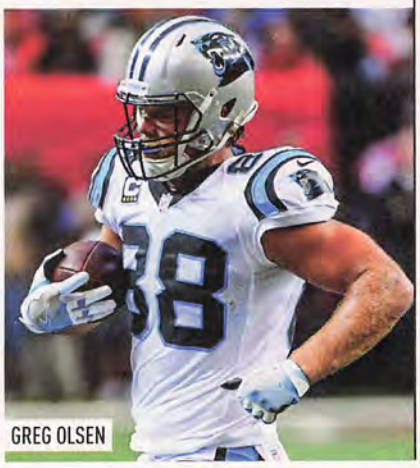
TRAINING-CAMP WAR? One of the most interesting battles in training camp will be between cornerback Captain Munnerlyn and wide receiver Devin Funchess. While with Minnesota in 2016, Munnerlyn called out Funchess, saying the Vikings had never worried about Funchess on the field and had shifted their coverage away from him and toward more legitimate playmaking threats. Then Carolina signed Munnerlyn in March. When asked if he would apologize to Funchess for the remarks, Munnerlyn said: "I definitely am not apologizing for saying it. That's not me. And that's how I felt. But now we're teammates, and we're competitors. And hopefully he is going to prove me wrong."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

78 A league-high 78 percent of runs against the Panthers on third-and-short, fourth-and-short and goal-to-go achieved a first down or touchdown.

2:30 Opposing offenses had the lowest average time of possession per drive (2:30) against the Panthers.

57 None of Carolina's top four wide receivers had a catch rate higher than 57 percent.



GREG OLSEN

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

NFC SOUTH FORECAST

4

This feels like a watershed season for the Saints — and perhaps the storied Sean Payton-Drew Brees tenure. After three consecutive 7–9 campaigns, players and coaches are motivated to return to the playoffs. The Saints privately believe they are flying under the radar and poised for a breakthrough season. And if the defense can stay healthy and muster some semblance of a pass rush, the Saints should have enough offensive firepower to challenge for the NFC South crown and return to the playoffs in the ultra-competitive NFC race. But they'll need some breaks to go their way for a change.

OFFENSE As Brees goes, so go the Saints. Even at 38, Brees remains one of the elite passers in the league. He compensates for his lack of prototype size and arm strength with anticipation and an encyclopedic knowledge of Payton's complex offense. Few quarterbacks are given more control at the line of scrimmage, and Brees is a master at reading defenses before the snap and beating coverages with his quick release and uncanny accuracy. Even without big-play threat Brandin Cooks, Brees should enjoy another big season.

The emergence of Michael Thomas and the acquisition of Ted Ginn Jr. made the speedy Cooks expendable. Thomas uses his powerful hands and 6'3" frame to physically dominate defensive backs on competitive balls downfield. He compares to former Saints great Marques Colston with his uncanny body control and innate feel for getting open against zone or man-to-man coverage. With Cooks gone, Thomas is Brees' clear go-to receiver in the red zone. On another team, Willie Snead might not be a factor, but in the Saints' intricate, timing-based attack, he excels with his smarts, sure hands and precise route-running. He's a favorite target of Brees on third down. Ginn fills Cooks' role as the deep threat, and even at 32, he can still take the top off a defense with his sprinter's speed.

Tight end Coby Fleener lacks the big-play ability of past Saints tight ends, but he's a good athlete capable of producing a big game if defenses concentrate too much of the team's receiving corps. Fleener does most of his damage on seam and intermediate routes. He needs to become stronger on competitive catches in traffic.

Mark Ingram has blossomed into one of the league's best all-around backs. He drives through tackles with his powerful legs and low center of gravity and has become a dependable receiver in passing situations. He's the clear starter. The Saints believe Adrian Peterson has plenty of juice left in his 32-year-old legs and can share the workload with Ingram. If he can stay healthy, he'll provide insurance for Ingram, who has battled injuries throughout his career. Look for Ingram and Peterson to alternate series and share the workload.

If the offensive line can stay intact, it has the potential to be one of the better groups of the Brees era. Health, however, is a concern. Veteran center Max Unger suffered a foot injury in the offseason and is expected to miss the start of the regular season. Losing Unger for any significant period of time would test the Saints' depth along the interior. Right guard Larry Warford was signed in free agency to replace Jahri Evans and be a road-grader in the running game. The Saints will run behind him and powerful right tackle Zach Strief in short-yardage situations. If left tackle Terron Armstead can stay healthy, this could be the season he earns his first Pro Bowl invite. The Saints are so deep at tackle 2015 first-round pick Andrus Peat has permanently switched to left guard. Athletic first-round draft pick Ryan Ramczyk was one of the top tackle prospects in the draft.

DEFENSE The Saints showed progress in their first full season under coordinator Dennis Allen, playing better than their 27th overall defensive ranking. They were improved against the run and solid in short-yardage and goal-line situations. The goal this season is to make more big plays.

Once again, everything comes down to the pass rush. End Cameron Jordan and interior linemen Nick Fairley and Sheldon Rankins

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER: Tom Benson
EXECUTIVE VP/GENERAL MANAGER: Mickey Loomis
VP OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION: Khai Harley
STADIUM: Mercedes-Benz Superdome (73,208)
SURFACE: UBU Sports Speed Series S5-M
WEBSITE: www.neworleanssaints.com
TICKETS: 1-504-731-1700
TRAINING CAMP: New Orleans Saints Training Facility (Metairie, La.), The Greenbrier (White Sulphur Springs, W.Va.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Sean Payton
RECORD WITH TEAM: 94–66
CAREER RECORD: 94–66
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Pete Carmichael Jr.
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Dennis Allen
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Bradford Banta
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/TIGHT ENDS: Dan Campbell
SENIOR OFFENSIVE ASST./WIDE RECEIVERS: Curtis Johnson
QUARTERBACKS: Joe Lombardi
RUNNING BACKS: Joel Thomas
OFFENSIVE LINE: Dan Roushar
DEFENSIVE LINE: Ryan Nielsen
LINEBACKERS: Mike Nolan
SECONDARY: Aaron Glenn

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

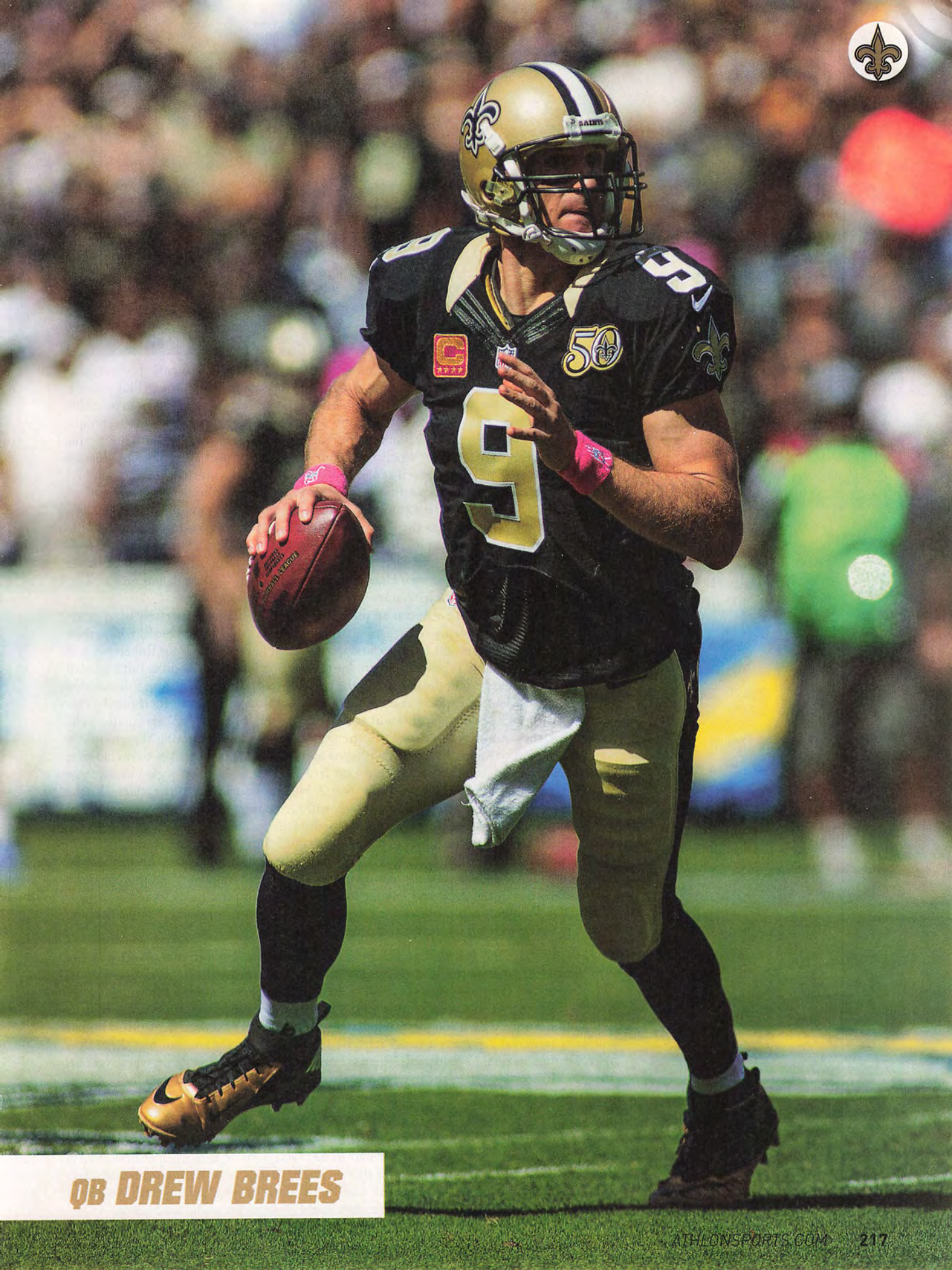
2012	7
2013	11 (PLAYOFFS)
2014	7
2015	7
2016	7

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 11	at Minnesota (Mon.)	7:10	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Sept. 17	New England	1:00	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Sept. 24	at Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Oct. 1	vs. Miami (London)	9:30 (am)	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
BYE							
Oct. 15	Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Oct. 22	at Green Bay	1:00	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Oct. 29	Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Nov. 5	Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Nov. 12	at Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Nov. 19	Washington	1:00	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Nov. 26	at L.A. Rams	4:05	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Dec. 3	Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Dec. 7	at Atlanta (Thu.)	8:25	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Dec. 17	N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
Dec. 24	Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Dec. 31	at Tampa Bay	1:00	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)

2016 NFL RANKINGS

Peter Brouillet



QB DREW BREES

2016 RESULTS (7-9)

Sept. 11	Oakland	L	34-35
Sept. 18	at N.Y. Giants	L	13-16
Sept. 26	Atlanta	L	32-45
Oct. 2	at San Diego	W	35-34
Oct. 16	Carolina	W	41-38
Oct. 23	at Kansas City	L	21-27
Oct. 30	Seattle	W	25-20
Nov. 6	at San Francisco	W	41-23
Nov. 13	Denver	L	23-25
Nov. 17	at Carolina	L	20-23
Nov. 27	Los Angeles	W	49-21
Dec. 4	Detroit	L	13-28
Dec. 11	at Tampa Bay	L	11-16
Dec. 18	at Arizona	W	48-41
Dec. 24	Tampa Bay	W	31-24
Jan. 1	at Atlanta	L	32-38

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Drew Brees	673	471	5,208	37	15
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Mark Ingram	205	1,043	5.1	6	
Tim Hightower	133	548	4.1	4	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Michael Thomas	92	1,137	12.4	9	
Brandin Cooks	78	1,173	15.0	8	
Willie Snead	72	895	12.4	4	
Coby Fleener	50	631	12.6	3	
Mark Ingram	46	319	6.9	4	
Travaris Cadet	40	281	7.0	4	
Brandon Coleman	26	281	10.8	3	

KICKING: Wil Lutz, 28-34 FGs, 49-50 PAT, 133 points
TACKLES: Craig Robertson, 115; Vonn Bell, 87
SACKS: Cameron Jordan, 7.5; Nick Fairley, 6.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Three players tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	426.0	1	1
Rushing	108.9	16	6
Passing	317.1	1	1
Scoring	29.3	2	2
Third Down %	48.6	1	1
Punt Returns	9.6	9	6
Kick Returns	16.5	31	15

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	375.4	27	14
Rushing	101.6	14	7
Passing	273.8	32	16
Scoring	28.4	31	15
Interceptions	9	T27	T14
Sacks	30	27	15
Turnover Differential	-3	23	13

MARK INGRAM

have shown the ability to pressure the passer, but the Saints need someone to emerge as a double-digit sack specialist. Jordan has quietly developed into one of the NFL's best all-around ends and is the anchor on the right side. He lacks the explosive first step to beat elite tackles off the edge but wins the battle at the line of scrimmage with textbook technique and powerful hands. Fairley and Rankins combined for 10.5 sacks inside. Both are terrific athletes with the size to anchor against the run. The Saints expect even more production from Rankins after he missed seven games of his rookie season with a fractured fibula.

The left end spot remains a question mark. The Saints have a number of candidates on the roster but likely will use a committee to man the position. Alex Okafor, signed as a free agent in the offseason, has the ability to become an effective pass rusher but needs to stay healthy. The Saints are hoping he's their end version of Fairley, a low risk/high reward reclamation project. Behind Okafor is reliable veteran Darryl Tapp, and a pack of young edge rushers, led by third-year men Hau'oli Kikaha and Obum Gwacham and rookies Trey Hendrickson and Al-Quadin Muhammad. Kikaha has the most promise.

Improving the linebacker corps was an offseason focus. The Saints desperately need veteran Dannell Ellerbe to have an injury-free season on the weak side. When healthy, he is their best playmaker at the second level because of his speed and range. Craig Robertson and free-agent signee Manti Te'o will compete for the starting job in the middle. Both excel at reading offenses and getting the defense in the proper play and alignment. The Saints added free agent A.J. Klein and rookie Alex Anzalone in an effort to improve their depth. Pass coverage has been a problem for this unit and could be again if Ellerbe can't stay on the field.

On paper, the secondary looks like the strength of the defense, assuming the group can stay healthy. Safety Kenny Vaccaro is a jack-of-all trades whom Allen likes to use all over the field. He's smart and fearless. Second-year free safety Vonn Bell struggled in coverage at times and should be much improved in Year 2. He and Vaccaro are sure tacklers. Rookie Marcus Williams and veteran Rafael Bush will factor into Allen's three-safety look in sub-packages. Williams has the playmaking potential the Saints have lacked in recent years.

Cornerback Delvin Breaux hopes to return to his 2015 form after an injury-riddled 2016. He overpowers receivers with his size and strength in press coverage. A host of candidates will compete for the starting spot opposite him. Rookie Marshon Lattimore was the top-rated corner in the draft and has the athletic potential to become a lock-down player early. P.J. Williams is a terrific athlete with excellent man-to-man cover skills. Sterling Moore is a savvy veteran who plays with great confidence.

SPECIALISTS The Saints hope a new coordinator and new return man inject new life into their moribund special teams. Bradford Banta is charged with improving the units. The 32-year-old Ginn was signed in free agency to inject juice into the return game. He remains a dangerous threat on returns with his breakaway speed. The Saints are confident Wil Lutz has solved their longstanding placekicking issues. The second-year pro is poised and has a powerful leg. After a shaky start, he settled down nicely and finished the season by converting his final 13 field goals. There are no issues in the punting game, where veteran Thomas Morstead is one of the most consistent, powerful and reliable punters in the game.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Saints quietly believe they can follow in the footsteps of their division brethren, the Carolina Panthers and Atlanta Falcons, and make the leap from also-rans to champions. There is precedent here. The Saints went 7–9 and 8–8 in 2007 and 2008, respectively, then bolted to a 13–0 start in 2009 and went on to win Super Bowl XLIV. Brees has compared the vibe and roster this season favorably to 2009. The team is stacked with young talent from three consecutive solid drafts. If the defense can stay healthy and the Saints can survive a brutal early schedule, they could contend for a wild card berth.

Peter Brouillet

2017 VETERAN SAINTS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
9 Brees, Drew	QB	6-0	209	16	Purdue	FA-SD-06	D2-SD-01
10 Daniel, Chase	QB	6-0	225	8	Missouri	FA-Phi-17	FA-Was-09
18 Grayson, Garrett	QB	6-2	220	2	Colorado State	D3a-15	D3a-NO-15
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
38 Cadet, Travaris	RB	6-1	210	5	Appalachian State	W-SF-15	FA-NO-12
22 Ingram, Mark	RB	5-9	215	6	Alabama	D1b-11	D1b-NO-11
29 Kuhn, John	FB	6-0	250	11	Shippensburg	FA-GB-16	FA-Pit-05
36 Lasco, Daniel	RB	6-1	205	1	California	D7-16	D7-NO-16
23 Murphy, Marcus	RB	5-9	195	2	Missouri	D7-15	D7-NO-15
28 Peterson, Adrian	RB	6-1	220	10	Oklahoma	FA-Min-17	D1-Min-07
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
16 Coleman, Brandon	WR	6-6	225	2	Rutgers	FA-14	FA-NO-14
82 Fleener, Coby	TE	6-6	251	5	Stanford	FA-Ind-16	D2-Ind-12
Ginn Jr., Ted	WR	5-11	180	10	Ohio State	FA-Car-17	D1-Mia-07
45 Griffin, Garrett	TE	6-4	240	1	Air Force	FA-16	FA-NO-16
89 Hill, Josh	TE	6-5	250	4	Idaho State	FA-13	FA-NO-13
84 Hoomanawanui, Michael	TE	6-4	265	7	Illinois	T-NE-15	D5-LAR-10
19 Lampman, Jake	WR	6-0	205	1	Ferris State	FA-16	FA-NO-16
Lawrence, Rashad	WR	6-2	203	2	Northwestern	FA-17	FA-Was-14
87 Lewis, Tommylee	WR	5-7	168	1	Northern Illinois	FA-16	FA-NO-16
86 Phillips, John	TE	6-5	251	8	Virginia	W-Den-16	D6-Dal-09
83 Snead, Willie	WR	5-11	195	2	Ball State	FA-14	FA-Cle-14
85 Stoneburner, Jake	TE	6-3	261	3	Ohio State	FA-16	FA-GB-13
13 Thomas, Michael	WR	6-3	212	1	Ohio State	D2a-16	D2a-NO-16
81 Williams-Lambert, Jordan	WR	6-3	228	1	Ball State	FA-16	FA-NO-16
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
66 Allen, Jack	OL	6-2	296	1	Michigan State	FA-16	FA-NO-16
72 Armstead, Terron	T	6-5	304	4	Arkansas-Pine Bluff	D3a-13	D3a-NO-13
77 Fullington, John	OL	6-5	300	2	Washington State	FA-16	FA-GB-14
65 Kelemete, Senio	C/G	6-3	300	4	Washington	FA-13	D5-Ari-12
75 Peat, Andrus	G/T	6-7	316	2	Stanford	D1a-15	D1a-NO-15
64 Strief, Zach	T	6-7	320	11	Northwestern	D7a-06	D7a-NO-06
78 Turner, Landon	OL	6-4	325	1	North Carolina	FA-16	FA-NO-16
60 Unger, Max	C	6-5	305	8	Oregon	T-Sea-15	D2-Sea-09
Warford, Larry	G	6-3	317	4	Kentucky	FA-Det-17	D3-Det-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
95 Davison, Tyeler	DT	6-2	309	2	Fresno State	D5b-15	D5b-NO-15
90 Fairley, Nick	DT	6-4	308	6	Auburn	FA-LAR-16	D1-Det-11
58 Gwacham, Obum	DE	6-5	246	2	Oregon State	W-Sea-15	D6a-Sea-15
94 Jordan, Cameron	DE	6-4	287	6	California	D1a-11	D1a-NO-11
44 Kikaha, Hau'oli	DE	6-3	246	2	Washington	D2-15	D2-NO-15
LaFrance, Royce	DE	6-3	258	1	Tulane	FA-17	FA-NO-16
76 Loewen, Mitchell	DE	6-5	275	1	Arkansas	FA-16	FA-NO-16
96 Mabry, Ashaad	DT	6-3	315	1	UTSA	FA-15	FA-NO-15
Okafor, Alex	DE	6-4	261	4	Texas	FA-Ari-17	D4a-Ari-13
93 Onyemata, David	DT	6-4	300	1	Manitoba	D4-16	D4-NO-16
98 Rankins, Sheldon	DT	6-2	305	1	Louisville	D1-16	D1-NO-16
55 Tapp, Darryl	DE	6-1	270	11	Virginia Tech	FA-16	D2-Sea-06
92 Zimmer, Justin	DT	6-3	292	1	Ferris State	FA-16	FA-Buf-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
50 Anthony, Stephone	LB	6-3	245	2	Clemson	D1b-15	D1b-NO-15
Bighill, Adam	LB	5-10	230	1	Central Washington	FA-17	FA-NO-17
59 Ellerbe, Dannell	LB	6-1	245	8	Georgia	T-Mia-15	FA-Bal-09
Klein, A.J.	LB	6-1	240	4	Iowa State	FA-Car-17	D5-Car-13
52 Robertson, Craig	LB	6-1	234	5	North Texas	FA-Cle-16	FA-Cle-11
54 Stupar, Nate	LB	6-2	240	4	Penn State	FA-Atl-16	D7-Oak-12
Te'o, Manti	LB	6-1	241	4	Notre Dame	FA-LAC-17	D2-LAC-13
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
37 Banjo, Chris	S	5-10	207	3	SMU	FA-16	FA-Jac-13
48 Bell, Vonn	S	5-11	205	1	Ohio State	D2b-16	D2b-NO-16
40 Breaux, Delvin	CB	6-1	196	2	None	FA-15	FA-NO-15
25 Bush, Rafael	S	5-11	203	6	South Carolina St.	FA-Det-17	FA-Atl-10
39 Calhoun, Taveze	CB	6-0	192	1	Mississippi State	FA-16	FA-Chi-16
46 Crawley, Ken	CB	6-1	180	1	Colorado	FA-16	FA-NO-16
20 Dixon, Brian	CB	6-0	195	3	NW Missouri State	FA-14	FA-NO-14
Gaitor, Anthony	CB	5-10	182	4	FIU	FA-17	D7-TB-11
21 Harris, De'Vante	CB	5-11	190	1	Texas A&M	FA-16	FA-NO-16
30 Harris, Erik	DB	6-3	225	1	California (PA)	FA-16	FA-NO-16
Hightower, Forrest	DB	5-10	186	1	San Jose State	FA-17	FA-NO-17
49 Keo, Shiloh	S	5-11	208	5	Idaho	FA-16	D5-Hou-11
24 Moore, Sterling	CB	5-10	202	6	SMU	FA-16	FA-Oak-11
27 Swann, Damian	CB	6-0	189	2	Georgia	D5c-15	D5c-NO-15
32 Vaccaro, Kenny	S	6-0	214	4	Texas	D1-13	D1-NO-13
25 Williams, P.J.	CB	6-0	196	2	Florida State	D3b-15	D3b-NO-15
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
3 Lutz, Wil	K	5-11	184	1	Georgia State	FA-16	FA-Bal-16
6 Morstead, Thomas	P	6-4	235	8	SMU	D5-09	D5-NO-09

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	13	Michael Thomas	16	Brandon Coleman
WR	83	Willie Snead		Ted Ginn Jr.
LT	72	Terron Armstead	75	Andrus Peat
LG	75	Andrus Peat	65	Senio Kelemete
C	60	Max Unger	66	Jack Allen
RG		Larry Warford	78	Landon Turner
RT	64	Zach Strief		Ryan Ramczyk (R)
TE	82	Coby Fleener	89	Josh Hill
QB	9	Drew Brees	10	Chase Daniel
RB	22	Mark Ingram		Adrian Peterson
FB	29	John Kuhn		

DEFENSE

DE		Alex Okafor	44	Hau'oli Kikaha
DT	95	Tyeler Davison	93	David Onyemata
DT	90	Nick Fairley	98	Sheldon Rankins
DE	94	Cameron Jordan	55	Darryl Tapp
WLB	59	Dannell Ellerbe	54	Nathan Stupar
MLB		Manti Te'o	52	Craig Robertson
SLB		A.J. Klein	50	Stephone Anthony
CB		Marshon Lattimore (R)	25	P.J. Williams
CB	40	Delvin Breaux	24	Sterling Moore
SS	32	Kenny Vaccaro	30	Erik Harris
FS	48	Vonn Bell	37	Chris Banjo

SPECIALISTS

K	3	Wil Lutz	KR	Ted Ginn Jr.
P	6	Thomas Morstead	PR	Ted Ginn Jr.

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
S	Rafael Bush	Detroit
QB	Chase Daniel	Philadelphia
WR	Ted Ginn Jr.	Carolina
LB	A.J. Klein	Carolina
DE	Alex Okafor	Arizona
RB	Adrian Peterson	Minnesota
LB	Manti Te'o	San Diego
OG	Larry Warford	Detroit

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
S	Jairus Byrd	Free Agent
WR	Brandin Cooks	New England
OLB	Kasim Edebali	Denver
RB	Tim Hightower	San Francisco
OG	Tim Lelito	Tennessee

SCOUTING THE SAINTS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP NEW ORLEANS "Winning one Super Bowl is hard, but is it fair to ask if the Saints have maximized their time with Drew Brees as the quarterback? Defensively, they have tried different coordinators, added free agents and drafted to that side of the football, and yet nothing has really worked. ... Sheldon Rankins returned from a fractured leg to total four sacks in nine games. ... They traded Brandin Cooks for the Patriots' first-round choice and landed cornerback Marshon Lattimore and tackle Ryan Ramczyk in the draft. ... The Saints made a splash in secondary free agency by signing Adrian Peterson, so it appears that he has come to grips with the reality of being part of a backfield committee rather than 'The Guy.' Mark Ingram returns off his best overall season with 1,043 yards rushing and 46 receptions. He's still the No. 1 guy. ... The offensive line is suspect, and they have yet to get much out of former first rounder Andrus Peat, who has been below average thus far. ... Without Cooks, Brees loses a dynamic playmaker, but New Orleans has plenty left. Michael Thomas emerged as a rookie with 92 receptions and nine touchdowns, and Willie Snead has turned himself into a trusted target, too. ... They need another big year from defensive linemen Cameron Jordan and Nick Fairley to help their secondary. ... The reality is that the Saints must regain their homefield advantage in the Superdome, where they have gone a paltry 11–13 over the past three seasons."

SAINTS IN THE *DRAFT*

B+

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	**Marshon Lattimore**	**CB**	**6-0**	**193**	**Ohio State**
1.	Ryan Ramczyk	OT	6-6	310	Wisconsin
2.	Marcus Williams	FS	6-1	202	Utah
3.	Alvin Kamara	RB	5-10	214	Tennessee
3.	Alex Anzalone	LB	6-3	241	Florida
3.	Trey Hendrickson	DE	6-4	266	Florida Atlantic
7.	Al-Quadin Muhammad	DE	6-3	253	Miami

Marshon Lattimore should start immediately at one corner and team with Delvin Breaux to give the Saints their best cornerback tandem since Jabari Greer and Tracy Porter roamed the Superdome. Ryan Ramczyk has the size and athletic ability to play left tackle but will compete with Zach Strief for the starting right tackle spot. Either way, he's the eventual heir apparent. The Saints have been searching for a playmaker in center field, and safety Marcus Williams is a ball hawk who should play immediately in sub packages. The Saints believe the versatile Alvin Kamara can be the satellite back in their nickel offense, a position manned previously by Reggie Bush and Darren Sproles. Trey Hendrickson and Al-Quadin Muhammad are situational edge rushers who could work their way onto the field in sub-packages.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

NO COOKS, NO PROBLEM Fans were shocked when Brandin Cooks was dealt to the Patriots, but the Saints have proven over the years that the individual parts aren't as important as the sum of their offense. The Saints have traded a slew of offensive stars in the Sean Payton-Drew Brees era, including Reggie Bush, Darren Sproles, Chris Ivory and Jimmy Graham, and haven't skipped a beat offensively. As long as Brees is calling the signals and Payton is calling the plays, the Saints offense will continue to rank among the league's best.

CORNER OF CONTENTION The Saints desperately hope rookie Marshon Lattimore ends their futile run at the cornerback position. They seemingly have been haunted by it since their inception. In 50 seasons, the Saints have had three Pro Bowl cornerbacks: Dave Whitsell (1967), Dave Waymer (1987) and Eric Allen (1995). The current 22-year Pro Bowl drought is the longest in the NFL, a staggering run of futility at one of the game' most important positions.

POLY LIFE The addition of free-agent linebacker Manti Te'o gives the Saints seven players of Polynesian descent: Te'o, Michael Hoomanawanui, Senio Kelemete, Shiloh Keo, Hau'oli Kikaha, Max Unger and Larry Warford. The total is believed to be the highest in club history. "I don't think I have been on a team with so many Polys since high school," Te'o says. "It's going to be nice to have a lot of commonalities with people."

MY NEW KENTUCKY HOME Owners Tom and Gayle Benson have dived head-first into the horse racing business. The Bensons bought a 273-acre horse farm in Paris, Ky., and have purchased four broodmares to begin a breeding operation on the farm. Benson Farm at Greenwood Lodge effectively replaces the family ranch in Johnson City, Texas, as the Bensons' get-away retreat.

LS-WHO? LSU has more players on NFL rosters than any school in college football, but the Saints have not selected a player from the state's flagship school since 2010. The Saints, Chiefs, Lions, Ravens and Redskins are the five teams not to select at least one LSU player since then. The drought has become a source of frustration and bewilderment for Louisiana football fans. "Every year there's this question of, 'Are we going to draft an LSU player?'" Saints GM Mickey Loomis says. "Well, we want to, I promise you we want to. There's been lots of guys at LSU that have been on our radar screen and are desired by the Saints. It just hasn't worked out."

QBS DRAFTED One of the luxuries of having an elite quarterback is you don't have to waste draft picks on them. Since Brees joined the team in 2006, the Saints have used only two draft picks on quarterbacks: Sean Canfield in 2010 and Garrett Grayson in 2015. The Seattle Seahawks are the only other NFL team to invest so few draft picks on quarterbacks during that span. By comparison, the New York Jets and Denver Broncos have drafted eight quarterbacks apiece since 2006. The Saints showed interest in Jimmy Garoppolo, Jacoby Brissett and Patrick Mahomes in recent drafts. Payton said the Saints were so high on Mahomes they would have selected him with the No. 11 overall pick in the draft had Lattimore not slipped out of the top 10.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

36.7 Saints opponents averaged 36.7 yards per drive, highest in the NFL.

38.3 On the other hand, the Saints offense averaged 38.3 yards per offensive drive, which ranked third in the NFL.

5.0 The Saints ranked 28th in the NFL defensive adjusted sack rate, turning only 5.0 percent of their opponents' pass dropbacks into sacks.

MICHAEL THOMAS

Lattimore: AP; Thomas: Peter Brouillet

TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

NFC SOUTH FORECAST

3

The Bucs will face a murderers' row of quarterbacks this season: Tom Brady, Aaron Rodgers and Eli Manning in addition to NFC South gunslingers Drew Brees, Cam Newton and Matt Ryan.

Some may believe that that's what gave the team the excuse to raise ticket prices for the second year in a row. But the truth is, the Bucs believe that quarterback Jameis Winston is more than worth the price of admission.

If you're going to be involved in an arms race, it helps to have a prodigious young passer like Winston, who led his team to a 9–7 record last season, narrowly missing the playoffs by the third tie-breaker. It was enough to attract "Hard Knocks," the HBO sports miniseries, to Tampa Bay.

The Bucs engaged in a Weapons for Winston program in the offseason, adding free-agent receiver DeSean Jackson while drafting Alabama tight end O.J. Howard and Penn State receiver Chris Godwin to go with Mike Evans and Cameron Brate.

"You want to give a young quarterback weapons to throw to," general manager Jason Licht says. Mission accomplished.

OFFENSE Evans was targeted an astounding 175 times, the most of any player in the league. He caught 96 passes for 1,321 yards and 12 TDs, but he won't have to carry the offense anymore now that Jackson and Howard are on board.

Licht decided that the single biggest need for the Bucs was speed. "In fact, in my office I have it written on my grease board. It's been there for several months now," Licht says. Check that one off the list with Jackson's arrival.

Coach Dirk Koetter has lamented the lack of "explosive" plays, which he defines as runs of 12 yards or more and receptions of 16 yards or more. "DeSean has averaged an explosive play for his career," Koetter says. Jackson's career per-catch average is 17.7.

"DeSean, obviously, nothing needs to be said there," Licht says. "Everybody knows DeSean and what he brings to the table with his body of work over the last few years, since 2008. We're certainly very, very excited to have him."

Howard will serve more as an in-line blocking tight end who can get behind the defense. "First day of Senior Bowl practice in pads, Jason and I were sitting on the 35-yard line, and O.J. is putting on a clinic out there," Koetter says. "After about two periods, I stood up and said to Jason, 'I've seen the guy I want,' and I walked down the stairs."

Brate tied for the league lead among tight ends with eight touchdown receptions, and with the addition of Howard, he will be free to run option routes down the seam.

The biggest question mark on offense is at running back. Doug Martin will miss the first three games serving a suspension for PEDs. The Bucs re-signed Jacquizz Rodgers, and both Charles Sims and Peyton Barber return. Tampa Bay used a fifth-round pick on Boise State running back Jeremy McNichols, who has the best hands and is the best pass protector among backs in this year's draft.

Winston has to cut down on his turnovers. He's had 42 in two seasons (33 interceptions and nine lost fumbles). The Bucs expect him to have more time to throw the football, which should help alleviate that problem. The plan entering training camp was to move guard Ali Marpet to center to make room for J.R. Sweezy at right guard. That could lead to more inside zone runs and a good screen game with Marpet leading the way.

All those weapons in the passing game should help a Tampa Bay rushing attack that slumped to 24th in the league last season. Opposing defenses won't be able to play as many eight- or nine-man fronts against the Bucs.

DEFENSE The Bucs retained defensive coordinator Mike Smith, who signed an extension after kicking the tires on some head

THE ORGANIZATION

CO-CHAIRMEN: Bryan Glazer, Edward Glazer, Joel Glazer
GENERAL MANAGER: Jason Licht
DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: John Spytek
STADIUM: Raymond James Stadium (65,890)
SURFACE: Tifway 419 Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.buccaneers.com
TICKETS: 1-866-582-BUCS(2827)
TRAINING CAMP: One Buccaneer Place (Tampa, Fla.)

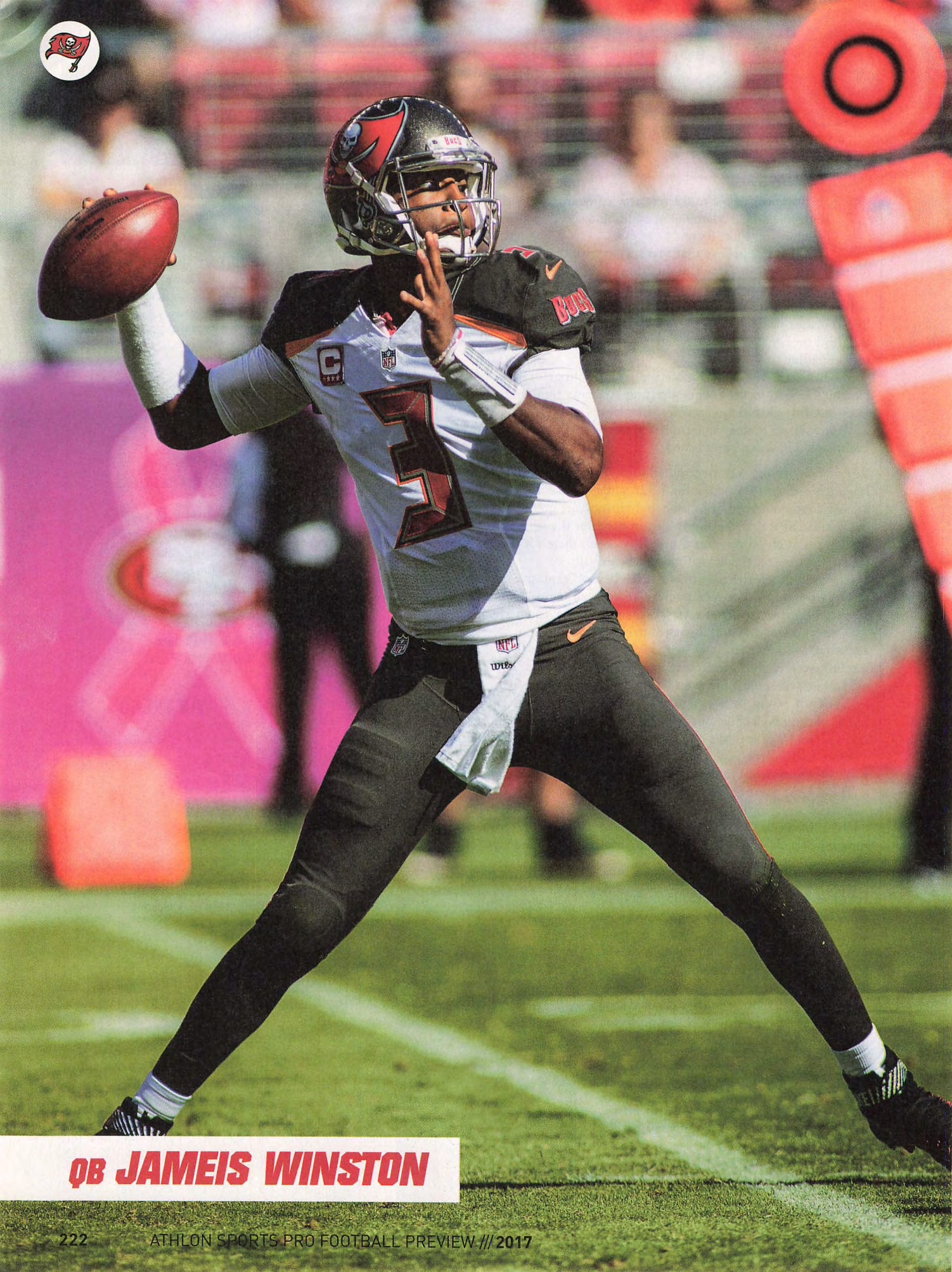
THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Dirk Koetter
RECORD WITH TEAM: 9–7
CAREER RECORD: 9–7
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR/WIDE RECEIVERS: Todd Monken
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Mike Smith
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Nate Kaczor
QUARTERBACKS: Mike Bajakian
RUNNING BACKS: Tim Spencer
TIGHT ENDS: Ben Steele
OFFENSIVE LINE: George Warhop
DEFENSIVE LINE: Jay Hayes
LINEBACKERS: Mark Duffner
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Brett Maxie

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	at Miami	1:00	10-6	332.8 (24)	382.6 (29)	22.7 (17)	23.8 (18)
Sept. 17	Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Sept. 24	at Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Oct. 1	N.Y. Giants	4:05	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Oct. 5	New England (Thu.)	8:25	14-2	386.3 (4)	326.4 (8)	27.6 (3)	15.6 (1)
Oct. 15	at Arizona	4:05	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Oct. 22	at Buffalo	1:00	7-9	354.1 (16)	357.0 (19)	24.9 (10t)	23.3 (16)
Oct. 29	Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Nov. 5	at New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Nov. 12	N.Y. Jets	1:00	5-11	329.3 (26)	342.4 (11)	17.2 (30)	25.6 (28)
BYE							
Nov. 26	at Atlanta	1:00	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Dec. 3	at Green Bay	1:00	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Dec. 10	Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Dec. 18	Atlanta (Mon.)	8:30	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Dec. 24	at Carolina	1:00	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Dec. 31	New Orleans	1:00	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)



QB JAMEIS WINSTON

2016 RESULTS (9-7)

Sept. 11	at Atlanta	W	31-24
Sept. 18	at Arizona	L	7-40
Sept. 25	L.A. Rams	L	32-37
Oct. 2	Denver	L	7-27
Oct. 10	at Carolina	W	17-14
Oct. 23	at San Francisco	W	34-17
Oct. 30	Oakland (ot)	L	24-30
Nov. 3	Atlanta	L	28-43
Nov. 13	Chicago	W	36-10
Nov. 20	at Kansas City	W	19-17
Nov. 27	Seattle	W	14-5
Dec. 4	at L.A. Chargers	W	28-21
Dec. 11	New Orleans	W	16-11
Dec. 18	at Dallas	L	20-26
Dec. 24	at New Orleans	L	24-31
Jan. 1	Carolina	W	17-16

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Jameis Winston	567	345	4,090	28	18
Mike Glennon	11	10	75	1	0
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Jacquizz Rodgers	129	560	4.3	2	
Doug Martin	144	421	2.9	3	
Peyton Barber	55	223	4.1	1	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Mike Evans	96	1,321	13.8	12	
Cameron Brate	57	660	11.6	8	
Adam Humphries	55	622	11.3	2	
Charles Sims	24	190	7.9	1	
Russell Shepard	23	341	14.8	2	

KICKING: Roberto Aguayo, 22-31 FGs, 32-34 PAT, 98 points
TACKLES: Kwon Alexander, 145; Bradley McDougald, 91
SACKS: Gerald McCoy, 7.0; Robert Ayers, 6.5
INTERCEPTIONS: Brent Grimes, 4; Keith Tandy, 4

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	346.4	18	9
Rushing	101.0	24	11
Passing	245.4	16	9
Scoring	22.1	T18	T9
Third Down %	43.9	6	4
Punt Returns	9.2	12	8
Kick Returns	14.6	32	16

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	367.9	23	12
Rushing	117.2	22	13
Passing	250.8	22	9
Scoring	23.1	15	8
Interceptions	17	T4	T1
Sacks	38	T9	T6
Turnover Differential	+2	T13	6

MIKE EVANS

coaching jobs during the offseason. He'll earn every cent of his paycheck after the Bucs did very little in free agency or the draft to help a defense that was middle of the pack at best a year ago.

Of Licht's 26 draft picks as the team's general manager, only eight have come on defense. This regime has clearly devoted more resources to the other side of the ball.

Redskins free agent Chris Baker will give the Bucs some more size inside. But there's no new help for defensive tackle Gerald McCoy, who is 29 and entering his eighth season. The Bucs have to hope that end Noah Spence (5.5 sacks) makes a leap in his second pro season the way the Falcons' Vic Beasley took off. Tampa Bay has to be excited about what Baker will bring to the field — 9.5 sacks, five forced fumbles and 100 tackles the past two years with Washington — and fans will enjoy the lighthearted personality he will bring to the locker room and the community. "I think I'm a funny guy. I like to dance a lot," says Baker, who signed a three-year deal worth nearly $16 million, with $9 million guaranteed. "But I like to win. … I'm always that guy that plays around probably a little bit too much, but that's just me. I've never been ultra-serious."

The biggest holes are in the secondary. Cornerback Brent Grimes will be 34. Vernon Hargreaves had a good second half as a rookie but recorded only one interception. After that, the cupboard is bare. The Bucs plan to move Ryan Smith from safety to cornerback. They also drafted Texas A&M safety Justin Evans in the second round. He's a big hitter who nevertheless missed a lot of tackles. The Bucs have Chris Conte and J.J. Wilcox to go with Keith Tandy at safety.

Linebackers Kwon Alexander and Lavonte David should benefit from some continuity with Mike Smith's return.

SPECIALISTS The Bucs would be the first to say that the decision to move into the second round and select Florida State kicker Roberto Aguayo in 2016 was a mistake. He made only 22-of-31 field goal attempts (league-worst 71.0 percent), and his long was a 43-yarder. But credit Licht and Koetter for not wanting to compound a mistake. The Bucs seem ready to move on from Aguayo if he wobbles at all in training camp. They signed veteran Nick Folk, guaranteeing him $750,000. Folk would seem to have an edge with his experience, but Aguayo won't go down without a fight.

The punting is solid behind Bryan Anger, who was signed to a three-year extension. The Bucs have never been very good at returning kicks; in fact, Koetter actually prefers touchbacks.

FINAL ANALYSIS The Bucs have some momentum on their side following their playoffs near-miss, but what will start with an appearance on Hard Knocks could end with the hard reality that the NFC South could be the toughest division in the NFL. The final two months of the season will be filled with division games that will be extremely important to the team's postseason hopes. Still, Winston is a special player who now has a full complement of weapons.

"You've got the last two MVPs in our division and the last two Super Bowl teams (from the NFC)," Koetter says. "It's just an unbelievable, competitive division. Our guys say, 'Hey, this is possible because we beat those teams and then watched them make it to the Super Bowl.' Expectations are a good thing, because if you don't have them, you're not going to be around as a player or as a coach."

The key this season may be whether the defense can hold up its end of the bargain. A 10-win season and at least a wild card appearance to end a nine-year playoff drought appear possible.

Winston: Peter Brouillet; Evans: Tim Umphrey

2017 VETERAN BUCCANEERS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
4 Griffin, Ryan	QB	6-5	210	3	Tulane	W-NO-15	FA-NO-13
14 Renfree, Sean	QB	6-5	225	1	Duke	FA-17	D7-Atl-13
3 Winston, Jameis	QB	6-4	231	2	Florida State	D1-15	D1-TB-15
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
43 Barber, Peyton	RB	5-11	225	1	Auburn	FA-16	FA-TB-16
36 Hicks, Quayvon	RB	6-1	256	1	Georgia	FA-17	FA-TB-17
46 Johnson, Austin	FB	6-2	240	3	Tennessee	FA-16	FA-NO-13
22 Martin, Doug	RB	5-9	223	5	Boise State	D1b-12	D1b-TB-12
32 Rodgers, Jacquizz	RB	5-6	205	6	Oregon State	FA-16	D5-Atl-11
25 Sims, Blake	RB	5-11	218	1	Alabama	FA-16	FA-Atl-16
34 Sims III, Charles	RB	6-0	211	3	West Virginia	D3-14	D3-TB-14
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
84 Brate, Cameron	TE	6-5	235	2	Harvard	FA-15	FA-TB-14
45 Cross, Alan	TE	6-1	235	1	Memphis	FA-16	FA-TB-16
17 Dye Jr., Donteea	WR	5-10	195	2	Heidelberg	FA-15	FA-TB-15
13 Evans, Mike	WR	6-5	231	3	Texas A&M	D1-14	D1-TB-14
15 Huff, Josh	WR	5-11	206	3	Oregon	FA-16	D3-Phi-14
10 Humphries, Adam	WR	5-11	195	2	Clemson	FA-15	FA-TB-15
11 Jackson, DeSean	WR	5-10	175	9	California	FA-Was-17	D2-Phi-08
16 Martino, Freddie	WR	6-0	195	1	North Greenville	FA-16	FA-Atl-14
18 Reedy, Bernard	WR	5-9	175	1	Toledo	FA-16	FA-Atl-14
88 Stocker, Luke	TE	6-5	253	6	Tennessee	D4-11	D4-TB-11
87 Walker, Derel	WR	6-1	188	1	Texas A&M	FA-17	FA-Ten-14
81 Westbrook, Tevin	TE	6-5	257	1	Florida	FA-15	FA-Ten-15
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
61 Allen, Josh	C	6-3	315	1	UL Monroe	FA-16	FA-TB-14
77 Benenoch, Caleb	OL	6-5	305	1	UCLA	D5-16	D5-TB-16
69 Dotson, Demar	T	6-9	315	8	Southern Miss	FA-09	FA-TB-09
60 Harrison, Jarvis	G	6-4	330	1	Texas A&M	FA-17	D5-NYJ-15
68 Hawley, Joe	C	6-3	302	7	UNLV	FA-15	D4-Atl-10
65 Liedtke, Mike	OL	6-3	305	1	Illinois State	FA-16	FA-Mia-15
74 Marpet, Ali	C/G	6-4	307	2	Hobart	D2b-15	D2b-TB-15
64 Pamphile, Kevin	G/T	6-5	310	3	Purdue	D5b-14	D5b-TB-14
76 Smith, Donovan	T	6-6	338	2	Penn State	D2a-15	D2a-TB-15
62 Smith, Evan	OL	6-2	308	7	Idaho State	FA-GB-14	FA-GB-09
67 Stone, James	C	6-3	291	2	Tennessee	FA-17	FA-Atl-14
73 Sweezy, J.R.	G	6-5	298	5	NC State	FA-Sea-16	D7a-Sea-12
66 Wester, Leonard	T	6-6	305	1	Missouri Western	FA-16	FA-TB-16
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
91 Ayers Jr., Robert	DE	6-3	275	8	Tennessee	FA-NYG-16	D1-Den-09
90 Baker, Chris	DT	6-2	320	5	Hampton	FA-Was-17	FA-Den-09
92 Gholston, William	DL	6-6	281	4	Michigan State	D4b-13	D4b-TB-13
94 Johnson, George	DE	6-4	265	5	Rutgers	T-Det-15	FA-TB-10
75 Lambert, DaVonte	DL	6-2	282	1	Auburn	FA-16	FA-TB-16
93 McCoy, Gerald	DT	6-4	300	7	Oklahoma	D1-10	D1-TB-10
98 McDonald, Clinton	DT	6-2	297	8	Memphis	FA-Sea-14	D7-Cin-09
96 Russell, Ryan	DE	6-5	275	2	Purdue	FA-16	D5-Dal-15
56 Smith, Jacquies	DE	6-2	260	3	Missouri	W-Buf-14	FA-Mia-12
57 Spence, Noah	DE	6-2	251	1	Eastern Kentucky	D2a-16	D2a-TB-16
71 Ward, Channing	DE	6-4	279	1	Ole Miss	FA-16	FA-TB-16
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
58 Alexander, Kwon	LB	6-1	227	2	LSU	D4-15	D4-TB-15
59 Bond, Devante	LB	6-1	236	1	Oklahoma	D6a-16	D6a-TB-16
54 David, Lavonte	LB	6-1	233	5	Nebraska	D2-12	D2-TB-12
53 Glanton, Adarius	LB	6-1	230	3	Florida Atlantic	FA-15	FA-Car-14
50 Knox, Jeff	LB	6-2	225	1	California (PA)	FA-17	FA-TB-17
52 Lynch, Cameron	LB	6-0	229	2	Syracuse	FA-16	FA-LAR-15
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
38 Adjei-Barimah, Jude	CB	5-11	200	2	Bowling Green	FA-15	FA-TB-15
23 Conte, Chris	S	6-2	203	6	California	FA-Chi-15	D3-Chi-11
35 Elliott, Javien	CB	5-11	176	1	Florida State	FA-16	FA-TB-16
24 Grimes, Brent	CB	5-10	185	10	Shippensburg	FA-Mia-16	FA-Atl-07
28 Hargreaves III, Vernon	CB	5-10	204	1	Florida	D1-16	D1-TB-16
39 Johnson, Isaiah	S	6-0	209	1	South Carolina	FA-16	FA-TB-16
27 Riggs, Cody	CB	5-9	187	2	Notre Dame	FA-16	FA-Ten-15
26 Robinson, Josh	CB	5-10	200	5	UCF	FA-Min-16	D3-Min-12
29 Smith, Ryan	CB	5-11	189	1	N. Carolina Central	D4-16	D4-TB-16
37 Tandy, Keith	S	5-10	205	5	West Virginia	D6-12	D6-TB-12
27 Wilcox, J.J.	S	6-0	212	4	Georgia Southern	FA-Dal-17	D3b-Dal-13
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
19 Aguayo, Roberto	K	6-0	207	1	Florida State	D2b-16	D2b-TB-16
9 Anger, Bryan	P	6-3	205	5	California	FA-Jac-16	D3-Jac-12
49 Dellenbach, Dax	LS	6-1	235	1	Florida State	FA-17	FA-TB-17
2 Folk, Nick	K	6-1	222	10	Arizona	FA-NYJ-17	D6-Dal-07
65 Sanborn, Garrison	LS	6-1	240	8	Florida State	FA-17	FA-Buf-09

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	11	DeSean Jackson	12	Chris Godwin (R)
WR	13	Mike Evans	11	Adam Humphries
LT	76	Donovan Smith	66	Leonard Wester
LG	64	Kevin Pamphile	62	Evan Smith
C	74	Ali Marpet	68	Joe Hawley
RG	73	J.R. Sweezy	77	Caleb Benenoch
RT	69	Demar Dotson	64	Kevin Pamphile
TE	84	Cameron Brate	88	Luke Stocker
TE	80	O.J. Howard (R)	45	Alan Cross
QB	3	Jameis Winston	4	Ryan Griffin
RB	22	Doug Martin	32	Jacquizz Rodgers

DEFENSE

DE	92	William Gholston	91	Robert Ayers
DT	93	Gerald McCoy	98	Clinton McDonald
DT	90	Chris Baker	75	DaVonte Lambert
DE	57	Noah Spence	56	Jacquies Smith
SLB	51	Kendell Beckwith (R)	59	Devante Bond
MLB	58	Kwon Alexander	53	Adarius Glanton
WLB	54	Lavonte David	50	Jeff Knox
CB	28	Vernon Hargreaves	29	Ryan Smith
CB	24	Brent Grimes	38	Jude Adjei-Barimah
FS	23	Chris Conte	37	Keith Tandy
SS	27	J.J. Wilcox	21	Justin Evans (R)

SPECIALISTS

K	2	Nick Folk	KR	15	Josh Huff
P	9	Bryan Anger	PR	10	Adam Humphries

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
DT	Chris Baker	Washington
K	Nick Folk	N.Y. Jets
WR	DeSean Jackson	Washington
QB	Sean Renfree	Atlanta
S	J.J. Wilcox	Dallas

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
QB	Mike Glennon	Chicago
S	Bradley McDougald	Seattle
DT	Akeem Spence	Detroit

SCOUTING THE BUCCANEERS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP TAMPA BAY "The Bucs certainly look like a team on the rise with a young franchise quarterback in Jameis Winston. Now, the trick for management will be putting enough assets around him and constructing a defense that can compete in a division loaded with quality signal callers. ... Winston is exactly what most forecasted when he was the top choice overall in 2015. He's a classic pocket passer with leadership qualities that connect him to his peers and a player that others believe in. In order for him to reach elite status, he must reduce his interceptions (18 in 2016). ... Doug Martin will complete the remainder of his four-game suspension during the first three weeks of the season. Fifth-round pick Jeremy McNichols could surprise as a rookie. ... Tight end Cameron Brate had a breakout campaign in 2016 with eight touchdowns, but the Bucs received a gift in first-round selection O.J. Howard. He was one of the cleanest prospects in the entire draft and should flourish with Winston. ... The club is very excited about the addition of DeSean Jackson and what his vertical speed can bring to the offense in connection to Mike Evans, who had a monster season last year. ... The offensive line is good enough but is a middle-of-the-pack unit overall. ... As long as Gerald McCoy is in the mix, the Tampa front will always have a chance to control the run and rush the passer. ... The Bucs have a set of modern game linebackers in Lavonte David and Kwon Alexander. Both can run and hit and tackle in space. ... Their secondary continues to improve and finished with 17 interceptions last season. ... In Year 3 of the Winston era, there are huge expectations for a team that could reach the playoffs. But they are in a really tough division. No bad teams in the NFC South."

Howard: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; McCoy: Tim Umphrey

BUCCANEERS IN THE DRAFT

B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	O.J. Howard	TE	6-6	251	Alabama
2.	Justin Evans	S	6-1	195	Texas A&M
3.	Chris Godwin	WR	6-1	209	Penn State
3.	Kendell Beckwith	LB	6-2	243	LSU
5.	Jeremy McNichols	RB	5-9	214	Boise State
7.	Stevie Tu'ikolovatu	NT	6-1	331	USC

The Bucs received a gift when O.J. Howard, a top-10 player in terms of talent and character, tumbled down the draft board until they selected him No. 19 overall. At 6'6", 251, he runs a 4.51 40-yard dash and can get behind the defense. But he also is a good blocker, rare for that position these days. More speed was added to the offense with Chris Godwin, who stunned scouts by running a 4.4 40-yard dash, and Jeremy McNichols, who was one of the best pass-catching backs in this draft. Tampa Bay had more needs on defense and did not address many of them. Justin Evans has a chance to force his way into the lineup as a starter. Kendell Beckwith is coming off a torn ACL and will eventually be a strong-side linebacker. Finally, nose tackle Stevie Tu'ikolovatu from USC enables the Bucs to get bigger inside and stop the run. Overall, Tampa added speed and playmaking ability.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

REALITY BITES On the day that "Hard Knocks," the HBO sports reality series, announced that the Bucs would be the featured team in 2017, Dirk Koetter's reaction was reflective of most head coaches in the National Football League. "I like watching the show," Koetter said. "I wish I wasn't on it." Koetter does not believe that "Hard Knocks" will be a distraction to the football team's preparation for the 2017 season. "This is the NFL. There are bright lights," Koetter says. "I look at it as it's just part of the deal. I think we'll be fine. There's going to be some stuff. It's a TV show. The real TV shows are Sundays in the fall. Those are the ones I worry about."

NOMADIC EXISTENCE Defensive tackle Stevie Tu'ikolovatu is one of the draft's more colorful characters. He started his college career in 2009 at Utah, spent three years on a Mormon mission, then spent two months living in his car with his wife in Los Angeles last summer after transferring to USC for his final season.

TIGHTEN UP Koetter was thrilled about landing Alabama tight end O.J. Howard with the No. 19 pick in the NFL Draft, hoping to continue a long history he's had of tight ends flourishing in his offense. "I'm the first to admit that I like tight ends," says Koetter, who saw Cameron Brate tie for the NFL lead among tight ends with eight TDs last season, matching the Bucs' franchise record for the most by a player at the position. Koetter's history with successful tight ends goes back a long way, and includes perhaps the greatest tight end in NFL history — Tony Gonzalez. He's also coached Marcedes Lewis and Zach Miller (at Arizona State), to name a few.

FINDING HIS VOICE Wide receiver Mike Evans expects to take a more vocal leadership role this season. A year ago, Evans excelled on the field, catching 12 touchdowns on the way to his first Pro Bowl. Now, with some of the veteran presence gone from the Bucs receiving corps, he understands he'll have to take on a different role in 2017. "I'm going to be a more vocal leader," says Evans, entering his fourth season in the league. "I always try to lead by example, but I'll be more vocal now, since V-Jax (Vincent Jackson) is gone."

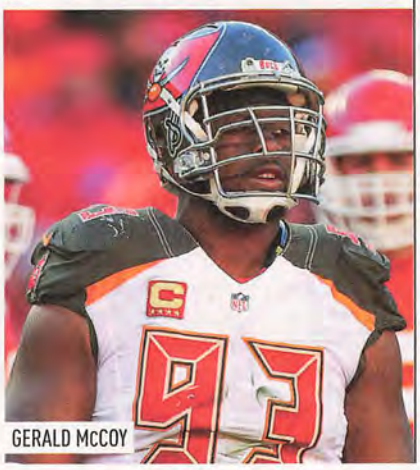
TAKING IT PERSONALLY Bucs defensive tackle Gerald McCoy says he is looking for more fourth-quarter sacks to close out games this season. "I haven't done enough to lead this team. Simple as that," he says. "If this team goes to the next level, as much as you need a franchise quarterback and those things are great, this organization, this team ... was built on defense. That guy in the middle is what makes everything roll. Of course, they brought up 99 (Warren Sapp) to me numerous times. Any dominant defense had a dominant guy in the middle, and basically, I just haven't been enough for my team. I won't get into the details, but I kind of took it personal. It's something I need to address moving forward."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

24 A league-high 24 percent of the Buccaneers' runs were stopped at or behind the line of scrimmage.

15.6 The Bucs forced turnovers on 15.6 percent of their defensive drives, the second-highest rate in the league.

47 Just 47 percent of runs by the Bucs on third-and-short, fourth-and-short and goal-to-go achieved a first down or touchdown, the lowest rate in the league.



GERALD McCOY

ARIZONA CARDINALS

NFC WEST FORECAST

2

Last year's Amazon-produced documentary on the Arizona Cardinals was entitled "All or Nothing." Amazon could do a sequel this year. Suggested title: "*Really* All or Nothing."

Coming off a 7–8–1 season, it's debatable whether there even is a Super Bowl window open for the Cardinals. Carson Palmer and Larry Fitzgerald aren't getting any younger, and a good argument can be made that Arizona peaked two years ago when it reached the NFC Championship Game.

But the Cardinals don't believe that's the case. Otherwise, they wouldn't have signed 32-year-old safety Antoine Bethea, 35-year-old linebacker Karlos Dansby and 42-year-old kicker Phil Dawson in free agency. They wouldn't have gone through seven rounds of the draft without picking the heir apparent to Palmer, who will be 38 when the season ends.

The Cardinals are all in, knowing that Fitzgerald and Palmer are more likely than not to retire after the season. The question is, does Arizona have one last run in it?

OFFENSE Two seasons ago, the offense belonged to Palmer and Fitzgerald. This year, it will be in the hands of running back David Johnson. And why not? Johnson is arguably the best all-around back in the NFL; last year he led the league with 2,118 all-purpose yards. Johnson is such a threat in the passing game — he caught 80 passes last year — that he is the team's second-best receiver behind Fitzgerald.

Coach Bruce Arians has said he wants Johnson to get 30 touches per game. That's all well and good, but there comes a point where that kind of workload could backfire on Johnson and the Cardinals. If the often-injured Andre Ellington can't be counted on to give Johnson a break at times, Arians needs to find a running back who will fill that role.

Palmer regressed in 2016, throwing 14 interceptions to go along with 26 touchdowns, but that's in part because the stubborn Arians kept asking his old quarterback to take five- or seven-step drops behind a leaky offensive line. For Palmer to be effective, Arians has to limit his play calls down the field and call for more short and intermediate passes. The question is, will he? Arians loves to throw the deep ball, and he has the speedy receivers — John Brown, J.J. Nelson — to stretch defenses. But the offensive line is still a concern, particularly on the interior. D.J. Humphries showed last year he could handle the left tackle position, and Jared Veldheer, coming back from injury, could be a dominant right tackle. But Mike Iupati isn't a great pass blocker, and the right guard position is unsettled. Then, too, there's the question of whether the ageless Fitzgerald can have another 100-catch season. At some point the years will catch up to him.

But if Palmer stays healthy … and injuries don't decimate the line like they did last year … and Fitzgerald is still Fitzgerald … and Arians tempers his high-risk philosophy, there's enough talent on offense to envision a lot of 30-point Sundays.

That's a lot of ifs, of course. But there's one more: If all else fails, give the ball to Johnson.

DEFENSE For all the talk about finding Palmer's replacement in the draft, the Cardinals knew their only chance to play meaningful football in January was to improve the defense. Arizona lost five defensive starters in the offseason, including two starting defensive backs and franchise icon Calais Campbell up front. It was no surprise, then, that the Cardinals spent their first two draft picks on defensive players, linebacker Haason Reddick and safety Budda Baker. Both should play immediately, if not start.

Reddick will complement Chandler Jones and Markus Golden to give Arizona one of the best pass rushes in the league. Jones and Golden both had double-digit sacks last year, and the presence of Reddick as a third-down blitzer should be a nightmare for opposing quarterbacks.

But will the Cardinals be able to stop the run? Campbell was a beast up front, often

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/CHAIRMAN: William V. Bidwill
PRESIDENT: Michael J. Bidwill
GENERAL MANAGER: Steve Keim
VP, PLAYER PERSONNEL: Terry McDonough
STADIUM: University of Phoenix Stadium (63,400)
SURFACE: Tifway 419 Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.azcardinals.com
TICKETS: 1-602-379-0102
TRAINING CAMP: University of Phoenix Stadium (Glendale, Ariz.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Bruce Arians
RECORD WITH TEAM: 41–22–1
CAREER RECORD: 50–25–1
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Harold Goodwin
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: James Bettcher
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Amos Jones
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/OFFENSE: Tom Moore
QUARTERBACKS: Byron Leftwich
RUNNING BACKS: Freddie Kitchens
WIDE RECEIVERS: Darryl Drake
TIGHT ENDS: Rick Christophel
OFFENSIVE LINE: Larry Zierlein
DEFENSIVE LINE: Brentson Buckner
LINEBACKERS: Bob Sanders
INSIDE LINEBACKERS: Larry Foote
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Nick Rapone
CORNERBACKS: Kevin Ross

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	at Detroit	1:00	9-7	338.8 (21)	354.8 (18)	21.6 (20)	22.4 (13)
Sept. 17	at Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Sept. 25	Dallas (Mon.)	8:30	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Oct. 1	San Francisco	4:05	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Oct. 8	at Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Oct. 15	Tampa Bay	4:05	9-7	346.4 (18)	367.9 (23)	22.1 (18t)	23.1 (15)
Oct. 22	vs. L.A. Rams (London)	1:00	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
BYE							
Nov. 5	at San Francisco	4:05	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Nov. 9	Seattle (Thu.)	8:25	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Nov. 19	at Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Nov. 26	Jacksonville	4:25	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Dec. 3	L.A. Rams	4:25	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Dec. 10	Tennessee	4:05	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Dec. 17	at Washington	1:00	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Dec. 24	N.Y. Giants	4:25	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Dec. 31	at Seattle	4:25	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)

W. E. Smith III

RB DAVID JOHNSON

2016 RESULTS (7-8-1)

Sept. 11	New England	L	21-23
Sept. 18	Tampa Bay	W	40-7
Sept. 25	at Buffalo	L	18-33
Oct. 2	L.A. Rams	L	13-17
Oct. 6	at San Francisco	W	33-21
Oct. 17	N.Y. Jets	W	28-3
Oct. 23	Seattle (ot)	T	6-6
Oct. 30	at Carolina	L	20-30
Nov. 13	San Francisco	W	23-20
Nov. 20	at Minnesota	L	24-30
Nov. 27	at Atlanta	L	19-38
Dec. 4	Washington	W	31-23
Dec. 11	at Miami	L	23-26
Dec. 18	New Orleans	L	41-48
Dec. 24	at Seattle	W	34-31
Jan. 1	at L.A. Rams	W	44-6

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Carson Palmer	597	364	4,233	26	14
Drew Stanton	48	19	192	2	3
RUSHING	**ATT**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
David Johnson	293		1,239	4.2	16
Kerwynn Williams	18		157	8.7	2
RECEIVING	**REC**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
Larry Fitzgerald	107		1,023	9.6	6
David Johnson	80		879	11.0	4
John Brown	39		517	13.3	2
Jermaine Gresham	37		391	10.6	2
J.J. Nelson	34		568	16.7	6
Darren Fells	14		154	11.0	1

KICKING: Chandler Catanzaro, 21-28 FGs, 43-47 PAT, 106 points
TACKLES: Tony Jefferson, 96; Deone Bucannon, 91
SACKS: Markus Golden, 12.5; Chandler Jones, 11.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Marcus Cooper, 4; Two players tied with 3

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	366.8	9	6
Rushing	108.2	18	8
Passing	258.5	9	5
Scoring	26.1	6	5
Third Down %	40.7	14	8
Punt Returns	6.1	T29	T15
Kick Returns	21.8	16	8

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	305.2	2	1
Rushing	94.9	9	6
Passing	210.3	4	2
Scoring	22.6	14	8
Interceptions	14	T12	T6
Sacks	48	1	1
Turnover Differential	0	T17	T8

CARSON PALMER

taking on two blockers and freeing up space for Arizona's linebackers to make plays. Arizona has to hope second-year pro Robert Nkemdiche, who was a bust as a rookie, has grown up and is ready to tap into his potential. If not, the Cardinals could be vulnerable to teams with a strong line and running game.

The other big question is at cornerback, where either Justin Bethel or Brandon Williams will line up opposite Patrick Peterson. Because teams rarely throw at Peterson, the other corner gets a lot of work, and neither Bethel nor Williams has proven to be up to that responsibility yet.

The Cardinals should be able to withstand the loss of safety Tony Jefferson in free agency, because Tyrann Mathieu finally has had an offseason in which he's not rehabilitating from an injury, and Bethea, while up there in years, can still play effectively. The drafting of Baker also will allow the Cardinals to limit Bethea's snaps so he doesn't wear down over the course of the season.

Perhaps the most important addition defensively was the signing of linebacker Dansby, now a Cardinal for the third time. Although the Cardinals have some vocal leaders, no one on the defense seemed to be able to hold others responsible last year. Dansby, who has the respect of everyone in the locker room, will have no trouble making sure his teammates are accountable and putting the work in.

SPECIALISTS The Cardinals special teams were, in a word, disastrous last season. The kicking game, the return game, coverage teams — there was little that went well, and it became such a problem that one of the biggest stories to emerge was Arians' refusal to fire special teams coach Amos Jones, a longtime friend.

At least Arizona didn't sit still in the offseason and just hope things would get better. It said goodbye to placekicker Chandler Catanzaro and signed the 42-year-old Dawson, who made 85.7 percent of his field goals last year. The tradeoff: Dawson doesn't have as strong a leg as Catanzaro — Dawson was 8-of-11 on tries 40 yards or longer, and he had just four touchbacks last season, the lowest number of any regular kicker.

Don't be surprised if the Cardinals look for a punter as the summer rolls on. In his three-game tryout last season, Matt Wile averaged a net 37.5 yards per kick and had a punt blocked. For a team with Super Bowl aspirations, a dependable punter is a must, and right now there's not one on the roster.

The kickoff return game should be stronger with the addition of sixth-round draft choice T.J. Logan, who averaged 32.9 yards per return for North Carolina last year and took two to the end zone. Logan didn't return punts at North Carolina, however, so that job likely will again fall to Peterson. Peterson once was a dynamic threat — he returned four punts for touchdowns in 2011 — but last year he averaged just 6.2 yards per return with a long of 17. The Cardinals would be better served finding a bigger threat with the ball in his hands.

FINAL ANALYSIS A lot of the Cardinals' wounds in 2016 were self-inflicted, particularly on special teams. Had a couple of field goals gone in, Arizona might have snuck into the playoffs as a wild card. But that doesn't mean a few roster changes have solved all of the team's problems. There was a sense of entitlement and a lack of physicality on last year's team. That has to change. Palmer has to play better. Fitzgerald has to continue to ward off the calendar. The defense has to be dominant, and not just play well in spurts. Is all of that possible? Sure. It's not a stretch to envision the Cardinals winning 10 or 11 games and putting themselves in position for a deep playoff run. But you can make just as convincing an argument that the window has slammed shut. The best guess: A nine- or 10-win season — assuming Palmer stays healthy.

W. E. Smith III

2017 VETERAN CARDINALS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
4 Dysert, Zac	QB	6-3	223	2	Miami (OH)	FA-16	D7-Den-13
3 Palmer, Carson	QB	6-5	235	14	USC	T-Oak-13	D1-Cin-03
5 Stanton, Drew	QB	6-3	243	10	Michigan State	FA-Ind-13	D2a-Det-07
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
38 Ellington, Andre	RB	5-9	199	4	Clemson	D6b-13	D6b-Ari-13
31 Johnson, David	RB	6-1	224	2	Northern Iowa	D3-15	D3-Ari-15
35 Penny, Elijhaa	RB	6-2	234	1	Idaho	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
33 Williams, Kerwynn	RB	5-8	198	3	Utah State	FA-14	D7-Ind-13
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
81 Binford, Harvey	WR	6-0	185	1	Lindenwood	FA-17	FA-GB-16
13 Brown, Jaron	WR	6-2	205	4	Clemson	FA-13	FA-Ari-13
12 Brown, John	WR	5-11	179	3	Pittsburg State	D3b-14	D3b-Ari-14
18 Bundy, Marquis	WR	6-4	215	1	New Mexico	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
83 Dobson, Aaron	WR	6-3	205	3	Marshall	FA-17	D2-NE-13
11 Fitzgerald, Larry	WR	6-3	218	13	Pittsburgh	D1-04	D1-Ari-04
10 Golden, Brittan	WR	5-11	186	3	West Texas A&M	FA-13	FA-Chi-12
84 Gresham, Jermaine	TE	6-5	260	7	Oklahoma	FA-15	D1-Cin-10
17 Hall, Marvin	WR	5-10	190	1	Washington	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
19 Hubert, Chris	WR	5-9	170	1	Fayetteville State	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
80 Momah, Ifeanyi	TE	6-7	255	2	Boston College	FA-15	FA-Phi-13
14 Nelson, J.J.	WR	5-10	160	2	UAB	D5b-15	D5b-Ari-15
87 Niklas, Troy	TE	6-6	270	3	Notre Dame	D2-14	D2-Ari-14
16 Ross, Jeremy	WR	6-0	215	5	California	FA-16	FA-NE-11
89 Valles, Hakeem	TE	6-5	260	1	Monmouth	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
67 Bergstrom, Tony	C	6-5	310	5	Utah	FA-Hou-17	D3-Oak-12
70 Boehm, Evan	G/C	6-3	310	1	Missouri	D4-16	D4-Ari-16
74 Humphries, D.J.	T	6-5	307	2	Florida	D1-15	D1-Ari-15
76 Iupati, Mike	G	6-5	331	7	Idaho	FA-SF-15	D1b-SF-10
75 John, Ulrick	T	6-5	307	3	Georgia State	FA-16	D7-Ind-14
71 Johnson, Kaleb	G	6-4	300	1	Rutgers	FA-16	FA-Bal-15
62 Munyer, Daniel	C/G	6-1	305	1	Colorado	FA-16	FA-KC-15
63 Price, Givens	T	6-4	310	1	Nebraska	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
53 Shipley, A.Q.	C	6-1	307	5	Penn State	FA-Ind-15	D7-Pit-09
61 Toner, Cole	G	6-5	300	1	Harvard	D5b-16	D5b-Ari-16
68 Veldheer, Jared	T	6-8	321	7	Hillsdale	FA-Oak-14	D3-Oak-10
73 Wetzel, John	G/T	6-7	328	1	Boston College	FA-15	FA-Oak-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
95 Gunter, Rodney	DE	6-5	305	2	Delaware State	D4-15	D4-Ari-15
97 Mauro, Josh	DE	6-6	282	3	Stanford	FA-14	FA-Pit-14
90 Nkemdiche, Robert	DE	6-4	296	1	Ole Miss	D1-16	D1-Ari-16
98 Peters, Corey	DT	6-3	305	7	Kentucky	FA-Atl-15	D3a-Atl-10
72 Pierre, Olsen	DT	6-5	293	1	Miami	FA-15	FA-Chi-15
92 Rucker, Frostee	DT	6-3	280	11	USC	FA-13	D3-Cin-06
91 Stinson, Ed	DE	6-4	287	3	Alabama	D5-14	D5-Ari-14
94 Williams, Xavier	NT	6-2	309	2	Northern Iowa	FA-15	FA-Ari-15
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
20 Bucannon, Deone	LB	6-1	211	3	Washington State	D1-14	D1-Ari-14
56 Capi, Cap	LB	6-3	249	1	Akron	FA-16	FA-Jac-15
56 Dansby, Karlos	LB	6-3	251	13	Auburn	FA-Cin-17	D2-Ari-04
59 Fua, Alani	LB	6-5	234	2	BYU	FA-15	FA-Ari-15
44 Golden, Markus	LB	6-3	260	2	Missouri	D2-15	D2-Ari-15
52 Gooden, Zaviar	LB	6-1	231	3	Missouri	FA-16	D3-Ten-13
55 Jones, Chandler	LB	6-5	265	5	Syracuse	T-NE-16	D1-NE-12
93 Jones, Jarvis	LB	6-2	245	4	Georgia	FA-Pit-17	D1-Pit-13
50 Martin, Gabe	LB	6-2	236	1	Bowling Green	FA-15	FA-Ari-15
96 Martin, Kareem	LB	6-6	272	3	North Carolina	D3a-14	D3a-Ari-14
58 Wright III, Scooby	LB	6-0	240	1	Arizona	FA-16	D7-Cle-16
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
41 Bethea, Antoine	S	5-11	206	11	Howard	FA-SF-17	D6-Ind-06
28 Bethel, Justin	CB	6-0	200	5	Presbyterian	D6a-12	D6a-Ari-12
39 Bouka, Elie	CB	6-1	205	1	Calgary	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
27 Branch, Tyvon	S	6-0	210	9	Connecticut	FA-KC-16	D4-Oak-08
45 Hartfield, Trevon	DB	6-0	195	1	SW Oklahoma St.	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
32 Mathieu, Tyrann	S	5-9	186	4	LSU	D3-13	D3-Ari-13
34 Miller, Harlan	CB	6-0	182	1	SE Louisiana	D6-16	D6-Ari-16
21 Peterson, Patrick	CB	6-1	203	6	LSU	D1-11	D1-Ari-11
26 Williams, Brandon	CB	6-0	200	1	Texas A&M	D3-16	D3-Ari-16
29 Zamort, Ronald	CB	5-10	174	1	Western Michigan	FA-16	FA-Ari-16
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
46 Brewer, Aaron	LS	6-5	232	5	San Diego State	FA-16	FA-Den-12
4 Dawson, Phil	K	5-11	200	18	Texas	FA-SF-17	FA-Oak-98
9 Leone, Richie	P	6-3	216	1	Houston	FA-17	FA-Bal-14
6 Wile, Matt	P	6-2	215	1	Michigan	FA-16	FA-Car-15

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	11	Larry Fitzgerald	14	J.J. Nelson
WR	12	John Brown	10	Brittan Golden
WR	13	Jaron Brown	16	Chad Williams (R)
LT	74	D.J. Humphries	69	Will Holden (R)
LG	76	Mike Iupati	70	Evan Boehm
C	53	A.Q. Shipley	70	Evan Boehm
RG	64	Dorian Johnson (R)	61	Cole Toner
RT	68	Jared Veldheer	73	John Wetzel
TE	84	Jermaine Gresham	87	Troy Niklas
QB	3	Carson Palmer	5	Drew Stanton
RB	31	David Johnson	38	Andre Ellington

DEFENSE

DE	90	Robert Nkemdiche	91	Ed Stinson
NT	98	Corey Peters	94	Xavier Williams
DE	95	Rodney Gunter	97	Josh Mauro
OLB	55	Chandler Jones	93	Jarvis Jones
ILB	56	Karlos Dansby	43	Haason Reddick (R)
ILB	20	Deone Bucannon	50	Gabe Martin
OLB	44	Markus Golden	96	Kareem Martin
CB	21	Patrick Peterson	34	Harlan Miller
CB	26	Brandon Williams	28	Justin Bethel
SS	41	Antoine Bethea	27	Tyvon Branch
FS	32	Tyrann Mathieu	36	Budda Baker (R)

SPECIALISTS

K	4	Phil Dawson	KR	22	T.J. Logan
P	6	Matt Wile	PR	21	Patrick Peterson

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
S	Antoine Bethea	San Francisco
LB	Karlos Dansby	Cincinnati
K	Phil Dawson	San Francisco

KEY LOSSES -

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
DE	Calais Campbell	Jacksonville
CB	Marcus Cooper	Chicago
S	Tony Jefferson	Baltimore
LB	Kevin Minter	Cincinnati
S	D.J. Swearinger	Washington

SCOUTING THE CARDINALS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP ARIZONA "In what proved to be a very frustrating 2016, Arizona failed to meet expectations when it lost a hard-fought opener to New England and never won more than two games in a row. ... Carson Palmer actually played at a high level last year. But he is not mobile, and durability at his age is the worry. ... Reports say the Chiefs jumped them in the first round for Texas Tech's Patrick Mahomes, so the quarterback of the future is not on the roster right now. ... David Johnson is a fantasy owner's dream, but what a player in real life. He accounted for 2,118 yards rushing and receiving, plus 20 touchdowns. ... This offense does not feature the tight end, but Jermaine Gresham did grab 37 passes. ... Larry Fitzgerald has adapted beautifully as he has aged and is now the short and intermediate specialist for Palmer as they connected 107 times in 2016. ... Center A.Q. Shipley plays better than he looks, and left tackle Jared Veldheer is more than functional on the blindside. Tackle D.J. Humphries has been a liability so far, and they drafted Pittsburgh's Dorian Johnson to bolster their interior line depth. ... They got one assist in five games from Robert Nkemdiche. ... Deone Bucannon is an active defender, but he can get exposed in the run game. ... First-round draft pick Haason Reddick brings a package of speed and versatility to the mix. He should make an impact right away. ... Arizona drafted Budda Baker from Washington to help replace Tony Jefferson. ... Patrick Peterson and Tyrann Mathieu set the tempo in the back end. ... Keeping Palmer upright is the key for them to get back to the playoffs, but I don't see the Cardinals being a legitimate contender for the Super Bowl."

CARDINALS IN THE *DRAFT* B

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	**Haason Reddick**	**LB**	**6-1**	**237**	**Temple**
2.	Budda Baker	S	5-9	195	Washington
3.	Chad Williams	WR	6-0	207	Grambling
4.	Dorian Johnson	G	6-5	300	Pittsburgh
5.	Will Holden	T	6-7	311	Vanderbilt
6.	T.J. Logan	RB	5-10	181	North Carolina
7.	Rudy Ford	S	5-11	205	Auburn

Unlike the past two seasons, when the Cardinals got little from their first-round picks, the team is expecting a lot from its selections. The Cardinals drafted productive players who also fit their needs. Haason Reddick, a former walk-on at Temple, will immediately be used in nickel packages — which Arizona employs a majority of the time — as a pass rusher off the edge. Budda Baker could step in and start given that Arizona lost two safeties in Tony Jefferson and D.J. Swearinger. Chad Williams can run well, but he'll play because of his size; other than Larry Fitzgerald, the Cardinals have a bunch of small, speedy receivers. Dorian Johnson has a chance to start at right guard, but even if he doesn't, he'll be used as depth at both guard spots. Will Holden, a three-year starter at Vanderbilt, raised his profile during the postseason circuit.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

BACK TO BASICS Some deemed Arizona's training camp last year "Camp Cupcake" because the team, in an effort to keep its players healthy, did little hitting. But that will change this season. Bruce Arians, upset with the team's lack of physicality last year, already has said there will be more emphasis on tackling. But that's a double-edged sword. In doing so, particularly with an older team, will Arians run the risk of losing players before the games begin?

TRAVELING MAN Wide receiver Larry Fitzgerald doesn't sit still in the offseason. He's visited 93 countries and all seven continents. So it made some sense this past offseason when Fitzgerald started his own travel company, Nomad Hill, which is "dedicated to creating life-changing experiences for our guests." Fitzgerald, who has been to the Kremlin and surfed volcanoes in Nicaragua, still has one place in the world he'd like to see: "I haven't gone to space yet," he says. "That's definitely on my bucket list."

ARIANS' FUTURE Retirement often comes up in conversations about Fitzgerald and Carson Palmer, but there's also some question as to how long Arians wants to coach. Arians will be 65 this October, and he had some health issues in 2016. He was hospitalized in the preseason with stomach pains and in the regular season with chest pains. Arians loves to coach, and he has an ideal partner in general manager Steve Keim, but 65 is 65. Something to keep an eye on.

START LINE, FINISH LINE The Cardinals' success in 2017 — or lack of it — will have a lot to do with how they manage the first part of their schedule and the last. Arizona opens with road games at Detroit and Indianapolis before coming home to face Dallas. The final three games: at Washington, vs. New York Giants, at Seattle.

LOOK TOWARD CHICAGO A lot of people believe the Cardinals will have to find their quarterback of the future in the 2018 draft. But that may not be the case. Arizona has long admired Mike Glennon, who is now keeping the seat warm in Chicago for Mitch Trubisky. If Glennon becomes available in the offseason, don't be surprised if Arizona makes a run at him.

LONDON BOUND The Cardinals will play the Los Angeles Rams in London on Oct. 22, and perhaps the most interesting take on the trip comes from tackle D.J. Humphries. "I've never been out of the country. I'm really excited about that," Humphries says. "I heard all the food is way better. A lot of stuff that's banned over there we just put in our food. People are telling me the yolk in their eggs are orange. I'm like, 'Really?' I can't wait to get over there and get some eggs."

LOUD AND PROUD Karlos Dansby might be at the end of his playing career — 35-year-old linebackers generally don't hang around for long — but he was an important addition in the offseason. Leadership was an issue for the Cardinals last season, and Dansby, who is in his third go-round in Arizona, isn't afraid of making his voice heard. He will also serve a vital role in mentoring first-round draft pick Haason Reddick, who, ironically, likely will eat away at some of Dansby's playing time.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

7.5 The Cardinals ranked third in the NFL in defensive Adjusted Sack Rate, sacking opposing quarterbacks on 7.5 percent of their pass attempts.

5.6 The Cards allowed a league-low 5.6 passes and 24.0 receiving yards per game to running backs.

29.5 Arizona's offense finished 29th in pressure rate, allowing their quarterback to be hurried on 29.5 percent of passing snaps.

LARRY FITZGERALD

Reddick: Andy Lewis/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images; Fitzgerald: W. E. Smith III

LOS ANGELES RAMS

NFC WEST FORECAST

3

A week before the Rams won their only Super Bowl in 1999, Sean McVay celebrated his 13th birthday. Now, 18 years later — and after an ugly half-decade under coach Jeff Fisher — the keys to the franchise have been turned over to McVay. At 31, he'll be the youngest coach in NFL history.

That may raise red flags for some, but for the Rams, McVay's youth was only a footnote on an impressive résumé, which includes turning the Redskins into an offensive force as coordinator and grooming Kirk Cousins into a quality NFL starter.

In Hollywood, though, the wunderkind coach will need to orchestrate a masterpiece if he hopes to turn around a Rams offense that, by every possible measure, was a complete flop.

Could this be the start of an epic comeback story? McVay has a young leading man to groom in quarterback Jared Goff and a former Offensive Rookie of the Year to lean on in running back Todd Gurley. He'll have a talented defense and one of the game's best coordinators in Wade Phillips. But the uncertainties are unending, and with such a young coach, it's fair to wonder how many growing pains lie ahead in 2017.

OFFENSE In 2016, Los Angeles' new NFL team truly scraped the bottom, ranking dead last in the NFL in yards per game (262.7). After a breakout rookie season, Gurley stalled. The line regressed, giving up the second-most sacks in the league (49). The quarterback on which the franchise's future was mortgaged proved underwhelming at best.

Out of such darkness, however, McVay apparently sees a silver lining. Call it youthful delusion, if you must, but McVay has at least made it clear that decisions are made with his quarterback in mind — a concept that somehow eluded Fisher.

Already, Goff is better situated under McVay. The Rams signed All-Pro left tackle Andrew Whitworth, who allowed just four sacks in his past three seasons, to protect Goff's blindside and veteran center John Sullivan to add experience up front.

Still, the cupboard is awfully bare. Adding reliable intermediate receiver Robert Woods helps in an offense that demands such qualities. But without last year's leading wideout Kenny Britt, who left for Cleveland, the Rams must hope Tavon Austin realizes his Swiss Army Knife potential. Austin will be challenged to diversify his route tree, and for a wideout who has never reached 510 yards receiving, the jury is out on his role.

The better bet to improve is Gurley, who must adjust to McVay's zone-blocking scheme. If he does, he should have more room to run — his 3.2 yards per carry were downright depressing last season — but a repeat of his rookie campaign, which benefited from unpredictable, long-distance touchdowns, is unlikely. If Lance Dunbar produces as a third-down receiving back, Gurley's role could be reduced.

Could a new playmaker emerge? Second-year leaps from tight end Tyler Higbee and wideout Pharoh Cooper are possible. Of anyone on the roster, Higbee should benefit most from the switch to McVay's vertical offense, which turned tight end Jordan Reed into a star. Toss in rookies Cooper Kupp and Josh Reynolds, and the pipe dream of a functioning offense doesn't seem totally far-fetched.

Ultimately, it's Goff's development in Year 2 that will decide the Rams' fate. After just seven starts, it's too early to offer a verdict on his future. If Whitworth can anchor the line from the left, Greg Robinson can turn his disappointing career around on the right side, Gurley can establish the run again and the new offense clicks, the opportunity will be there for Goff to succeed.

DEFENSE When McVay was hired in January, he understood the need to balance his youth and inexperience with a veteran voice on defense. Enter Phillips, the architect of the Broncos' Super Bowl-winning defense from 2015 and one of the most respected defensive minds in the league. Phillips' arrival means a switch from a 4-3 defense to a 3-4.

THE ORGANIZATION

OWNER/CHAIRMAN: E. Stanley Kroenke
EXECUTIVE VP OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS/COO: Kevin Demoff
GENERAL MANAGER: Les Snead
DIRECTOR OF PLAYER PERSONNEL: Taylor Morton
STADIUM: Los Angeles Coliseum (93,000)
SURFACE: Santa Ana Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.therams.com
TICKETS: 1-818-338-0011
TRAINING CAMP: UC Irvine (Irvine, Calif.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Sean McVay
RECORD WITH TEAM: 0-0
CAREER RECORD: 0-0
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Matt LaFleur
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Wade Phillips
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: John Fassel
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/LINEBACKERS: Joe Barry
QUARTERBACKS: Greg Olson
RUNNING BACKS: Skip Peete
WIDE RECEIVERS: Eric Yarber
TIGHT ENDS: Shane Waldron
OFFENSIVE LINE: Aaron Kromer
DEFENSIVE LINE: Bill Johnson
CORNERBACKS: Aubrey Pleasant
SAFETIES: Ejiro Evero

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2012	7
2013	7
2014	6
2015	7
2016	4

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	Indianapolis	4:05	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Sept. 17	Washington	4:25	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Sept. 21	at San Francisco (Thu.)	8:25	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Oct. 1	at Dallas	1:00	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Oct. 8	Seattle	4:05	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Oct. 15	at Jacksonville	4:05	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Oct. 22	vs. Arizona (London)	1:00	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
BYE							
Nov. 5	at N.Y. Giants	1:00	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Nov. 12	Houston	4:05	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Nov. 19	at Minnesota	1:00	8-8	315.1 (28)	314.9 (3)	20.4 (23)	19.2 (6)
Nov. 26	New Orleans	4:05	7-9	426.0 (1)	375.4 (27)	29.3 (2)	28.4 (31)
Dec. 3	at Arizona	4:25	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Dec. 10	Philadelphia	4:25	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Dec. 17	at Seattle	4:05	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Dec. 24	at Tennessee	1:00	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Dec. 31	San Francisco	4:25	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)

RB TODD GURLEY

2016 RESULTS (4-12)

Sept. 12	at San Francisco	L	0-28
Sept. 18	Seattle	W	9-3
Sept. 25	at Tampa Bay	W	37-32
Oct. 2	at Arizona	W	17-13
Oct. 9	Buffalo	L	19-30
Oct. 16	at Detroit	L	28-31
Oct. 23	N.Y. Giants	L	10-17
Nov. 6	Carolina	L	10-13
Nov. 13	at N.Y. Jets	W	9-6
Nov. 20	Miami	L	10-14
Nov. 27	at New Orleans	L	21-49
Dec. 4	at New England	L	10-26
Dec. 11	Atlanta	L	14-42
Dec. 15	at Seattle	L	3-24
Dec. 24	San Francisco	L	21-22
Jan. 1	Arizona	L	6-44

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Case Keenum	322	196	2,201	9	11
Jared Goff	205	112	1,089	5	7
RUSHING	**ATT**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
Todd Gurley	278		885	3.2	6
Tavon Austin	28		159	5.7	1
Benny Cunningham	21		101	4.8	0
RECEIVING	**REC**		**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**
Kenny Britt	68		1,002	14.7	5
Tavon Austin	58		509	8.8	3
Lance Kendricks	50		499	10.0	2
Todd Gurley	43		327	7.6	0
Brian Quick	41		564	13.8	3

KICKING: Greg Zuerlein, 19-22 FGs, 23-23 PAT, 80 points
TACKLES: Alec Ogletree, 136; Mark Barron, 118
SACKS: Aaron Donald, 8.0; William Hayes, 5.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Four players tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	262.7	32	16
Rushing	78.2	31	15
Passing	184.4	31	15
Scoring	14.0	32	16
Third Down %	31.5	32	16
Punt Returns	7.5	22	12
Kick Returns	23.9	6	3

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	337.0	9	4
Rushing	103.8	16	9
Passing	233.2	10	5
Scoring	24.6	23	11
Interceptions	10	T23	T11
Sacks	31	T24	14
Turnover Differential	-11	28	15

AARON DONALD

But while scheme changes often incite panic, Phillips has maintained that he'll take advantage of his personnel's strengths. Up front, there are still plenty of those to exploit.

In a scheme that turned Malik Jackson into a dominant force in Denver, All-Pro 3-tech tackle Aaron Donald may steal the crown as the NFL's best defensive player this season. Donald has 28 sacks in three seasons and should only improve with Phillips calling the shots. If he can stay healthy, Robert Quinn, a former Pro Bowl defensive end making the switch to 3-4 outside linebacker, could join him atop the league, thriving in the role DeMarcus Ware once filled under Phillips. Rushing from the other outside linebacker spot, Connor Barwin should prove to be a bargain addition after playing out of position in Jim Schwartz's Eagles defense. As recently as 2014, Barwin had 14.5 sacks, and if he can offer another pass-rushing threat, the Rams defensive front could be ferocious.

Inside, the speed and athleticism of Alec Ogletree and Mark Barron offer tantalizing versatility as well. Ogletree, in a contract year, could be on his way to a huge season, if he's able to iron out some of the over-aggressive mistakes that have plagued his first four years in the league.

The secondary is where the lion's share of questions remain. Trumaine Johnson was franchise tagged for a second straight season, despite taking a few steps backward in 2016, and in Phillips' scheme, which relies on press-man corners, the slower Johnson could struggle. Beyond Johnson, the situation is even more bleak. The Rams signed Kayvon Webster, previously in Denver, to add more competition to a less-than-stellar cornerback group, but he's never proven to be a starting-caliber player. To make up for the loss of safety T.J. McDonald, the Rams plan to move hard-hitting nickel back Lamarcus Joyner to the position, leaving new, pint-sized nickel back Nickell Robey-Coleman to step in for him. E.J. Gaines could bounce back from consecutive injury-riddled seasons, but he's no sure thing in a new scheme.

A dominant front can make up for a weak back end, though. A new, more evolved scheme can help cover up vulnerabilities. And with Phillips at the helm, the Rams can rest assured that the defense is at least in the right hands.

SPECIALISTS The Rams promised to bring in competition for once-struggling kicker Greg Zuerlein last summer but never followed through on their threat. Their inaction proved prescient, as Zuerlein bounced back in a big way, converting 86 percent of his kicks — up 20 percentage points from 2015. Whether the offense will give him enough opportunities is the real question.

As sad as it sounds, punter Johnny Hekker might have been the Rams' most dangerous offensive weapon last season. Hekker set the NFL record for punts inside the 20 last season — a record that says as much about the Rams' stalling offense as it does Hekker's punting prowess. Still, he's arguably the best punter in the game.

The return game is the only special teams group in flux. Do-everything returner Benny Cunningham signed with Chicago, which should give Cooper or Dunbar a chance to carve out a role. The team will likely cycle through several returners before settling on one.

FINAL ANALYSIS It's hard to imagine that things could possibly get worse for the Rams than their dismal 1–11 finish last season, and with a new coaching staff and new philosophy in place, the team will almost certainly improve on its 4–12 record, assuming the careers of young offensive cornerstones Goff and Gurley don't go down in flames. That said, there are no delusions of grandeur in Year 1 of the McVay era. Competing for a playoff spot is possible but unlikely. Measured progress is what's important now. Without any, general manager Les Snead's days in L.A. could be numbered.

Peter Brouillet

2017 VETERAN RAMS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
16 Goff, Jared	QB	6-4	215	1	California	D1-16	D1-LAR-16
14 Mannion, Sean	QB	6-6	233	1	Oregon State	D3b-15	D3b-LAR-15
12 Murray, Aaron	QB	6-1	207	2	Georgia	FA-17	FA-KC-14
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
39 Brown, Malcolm	RB	5-11	224	1	Texas	FA-15	FA-LAR-15
25 Dunbar, Lance	RB	5-8	195	5	North Texas	FA-Dal-17	FA-Dal-12
36 Green, Aaron	RB	5-11	205	1	TCU	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
30 Gurley, Todd	RB	6-1	227	2	Georgia	D1-15	D1-LAR-15
45 Laskey, Zach	FB	6-2	225	1	Georgia Tech	FA-15	FA-LAR-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
11 Austin, Tavon	WR	5-8	176	4	West Virginia	D1a-13	D1a-LAR-13
10 Cooper, Pharoh	WR	5-11	207	1	South Carolina	D4b-16	D4b-LAR-16
46 Harkey, Cory	TE	6-4	259	5	UCLA	FA-12	FA-LAR-12
84 Hemingway, Temarrick	TE	6-5	210	1	South Carolina St.	D6a-16	D6a-LAR-16
89 Higbee, Tyler	TE	6-6	250	1	Western Kentucky	D4a-16	D4a-LAR-16
15 Marquez, Bradley	WR	5-10	196	2	Texas Tech	FA-15	FA-LAR-15
8 McRoberts, Paul	WR	6-2	200	1	SE Missouri St.	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
3 North, Marquez	WR	6-3	229	1	Tennessee	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
82 Shippen, Brandon	WR	5-11	198	1	Temple	FA-16	FA-Mia-16
86 Spruce, Nelson	WR	6-1	205	1	Colorado	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
13 Thomas, Michael	WR	6-1	200	1	Southern Miss	D6c-16	D6c-LAR-16
87 Wilson, Travis	TE	6-7	233	1	Utah	FA-17	FA-LAR-17
17 Woods, Robert	WR	6-0	190	4	USC	FA-Buf-17	D2a-Buf-13
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
68 Brown, Jamon	G	6-4	323	2	Louisville	D3a-15	D3a-LAR-15
64 Donnal, Andrew	T	6-6	316	2	Iowa	D4-15	D4-LAR-15
79 Havenstein, Rob	G/T	6-8	321	2	Wisconsin	D2-15	D2-LAR-15
72 Murphy, Pace	T	6-6	308	1	NW Louisiana	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
65 Rhaney, Demetrius	C/G	6-2	301	2	Tennessee State	D7d-14	D7d-LAR-14
73 Robinson, Greg	T	6-5	332	3	Auburn	D1a-14	D1a-LAR-14
76 Saffold, Rodger	G	6-5	332	7	Indiana	D2-10	D2-LAR-10
61 Sullivan, John	C	6-4	310	9	Notre Dame	FA-Was-17	D6-Min-08
77 Whitworth, Andrew	T	6-7	330	11	LSU	FA-Cin-17	D2-Cin-06
69 Wichmann, Cody	G	6-5	319	2	Fresno State	D6b-15	D6b-LAR-15
63 Williams, Darrell	T	6-5	301	2	South Florida	FA-15	FA-LAR-15
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
90 Brockers, Michael	DT	6-5	326	5	LSU	D1-12	D1-LAR-12
99 Donald, Aaron	DT	6-1	285	3	Pittsburgh	D1b-14	D1b-LAR-14
91 Easley, Dominique	DT	6-2	285	3	Florida	FA-16	D1-NE-14
70 Fox, Morgan	DE	6-3	263	1	Colorado St. Pueblo	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
96 Longacre, Matt	DE	6-3	260	2	NW Missouri St.	FA-15	FA-LAR-15
Purcell, Mike	NT	6-3	303	3	Wyoming	W-SF-17	FA-SF-13
62 Trinca-Pasat, Louis	DT	6-1	292	1	Iowa	FA-15	FA-LAR-15
95 Walker, Tyrunn	DT	6-3	310	5	Tulsa	FA-Det-17	FA-NO-12
93 Westbrooks, Ethan	DL	6-4	267	3	West Texas A&M	FA-14	FA-LAR-14
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
26 Barron, Mark	LB	6-2	213	5	Alabama	T-TB-14	D1-TB-12
98 Barwin, Connor	LB	6-4	264	8	Cincinnati	FA-Phi-17	D2-Hou-09
59 Forrest, Josh	LB	6-3	255	1	Kentucky	D6b-16	D6b-LAR-16
55 Grigsby, Nicholas	LB	6-2	230	1	Pittsburgh	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
54 Hager, Bryce	LB	6-1	235	2	Baylor	D7a-15	D7a-LAR-15
58 Littleton, Cory	LB	6-3	227	1	Washington	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
57 McKinzy, Cassanova	LB	6-2	248	1	Auburn	FA-16	FA-TB-16
56 Northrup, Reggie	LB	6-1	237	1	Florida State	FA-16	FA-Was-16
52 Ogletree, Alec	LB	6-2	245	4	Georgia	D1b-13	D1b-LAR-13
94 Quinn, Robert	LB	6-4	264	6	North Carolina	D1-11	D1-LAR-11
53 Thompson, Carlos	LB	6-5	243	1	Ole Miss	FA-Hou-15	FA-17
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
31 Alexander, Maurice	S	6-1	220	3	Utah State	D4-14	D4-LAR-14
41 Christian, Marqui	DB	6-1	205	1	Midwestern State	W-Ari-16	D5-Ari-16
24 Countess, Blake	DB	5-10	185	1	Auburn	FA-16	D6-Phi-16
38 Davis, Cody	S	6-1	206	4	Texas Tech	FA-13	FA-LAR-13
33 Gaines, E.J.	CB	5-10	190	2	Missouri	D6a-14	D6a-LAR-14
32 Hill, Troy	CB	5-11	182	2	Oregon	W-NE-15	FA-Cin-15
27 Johnson, Isaiah	DB	6-1	206	1	Georgia Tech	FA-16	FA-Det-15
22 Johnson, Trumaine	CB	6-2	208	5	Montana	D3-12	D3-LAR-12
35 Jordan, Michael	CB	6-1	200	1	Missouri Western	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
20 Joyner, Lamarcus	DB	5-8	184	3	Florida State	D2-14	D2-LAR-14
47 Peterson, Kevin	CB	5-11	190	1	Oklahoma State	FA-16	FA-Chi-16
43 Randolph, Brian	S	6-0	202	1	Tennessee	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
23 Robey-Coleman, Nickell	CB	5-8	165	4	USC	FA-Buf-17	FA-Buf-13
21 Webster, Kayvon	CB	5-11	198	4	South Florida	FA-Den-17	D3-Den-13
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
6 Hekker, Johnny	P	6-5	236	5	Oregon State	FA-12	FA-LAR-12
44 McQuaide, Jake	LS	6-2	244	6	Ohio State	FA-11	FA-LAR-11
4 Zuerlein, Greg	K	6-0	196	5	Missouri Western	D6-12	D6-LAR-12

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	11	Tavon Austin	10	Pharoh Cooper
WR	17	Robert Woods	83	Josh Reynolds
WR	18	Cooper Kupp (R)	13	Mike Thomas
LT	77	Andrew Whitworth	64	Andrew Donnal
LG	76	Rodger Saffold	69	Cody Wichmann
C	61	John Sullivan	65	Demetrius Rhaney
RG	79	Rob Havenstein	68	Jamon Brown
RT	73	Greg Robinson	72	Pace Murphy
TE	89	Tyler Higbee	81	Gerald Everett (R)
QB	16	Jared Goff	14	Sean Mannion
RB	30	Todd Gurley	25	Lance Dunbar

DEFENSE

DE	93	Ethan Westbrooks	96	Matt Longacre
DT	99	Aaron Donald	91	Dominique Easley
NT	90	Michael Brockers	95	Tyrunn Walker
OLB	94	Robert Quinn	53	Carlos Thompson
ILB	26	Mark Barron	59	Josh Forrest
ILB	52	Alec Ogletree	54	Bryce Hager
OLB	98	Connor Barwin	58	Cory Littleton
CB	22	Trumaine Johnson	23	Nickell Robey-Coleman
CB	21	Kayvon Webster	33	E.J. Gaines
FS	31	Maurice Alexander	38	Cody Davis
SS	20	Lamarcus Joyner	43	John Johnson (R)

SPECIALISTS

K	4	Greg Zuerlein	P	6	Johnny Hekker
KR	10	Pharoh Cooper	PR	25	Lance Dunbar

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
OLB	Connor Barwin	Philadelphia
RB	Lance Dunbar	Dallas
CB	Nickell Robey-Coleman	Buffalo
C	John Sullivan	Washington
DT	Tyrunn Walker	Detroit
CB	Kayvon Webster	Denver
OT	Andrew Whitworth	Cincinnati
WR	Robert Woods	Buffalo

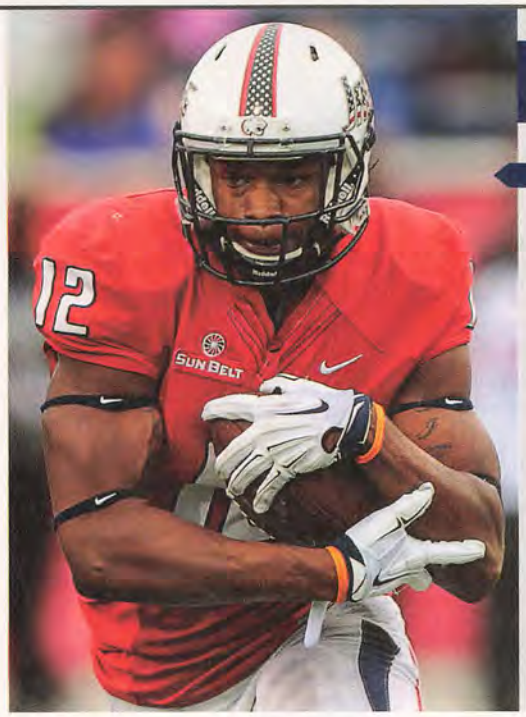
KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
C	Tim Barnes	Free Agent
WR	Kenny Britt	Cleveland
RB	Benny Cunningham	Chicago
DE	William Hayes	Miami
QB	Case Keenum	Minnesota
TE	Lance Kendricks	Green Bay
S	T.J. McDonald	Miami
WR	Brian Quick	Washington
DE	Eugene Sims	Free Agent

SCOUTING THE RAMS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP LOS ANGELES "Sean McVay was hired to energize the organization, install his version of the West Coast offense and save Jared Goff from being a bust. He is wise beyond his years, sees the big picture and astutely hired Wade Phillips as his defensive coordinator. ... Goff needs everything this offseason: weight room, classroom, confidence, footwork and eye control to have a fighting chance in the league. ... Todd Gurley was a shadow of himself in 2016 with only 885 rushing yards. ... The Rams signed Andrew Whitworth (Bengals) to take over at left tackle and provide some leadership. Rob Havenstein is adequate, but Greg Robinson has been a major disappointment and did not have his fifth year option exercised. ... Maybe Tavon Austin will fit McVay's offense and take off; in the meantime, they signed Robert Woods (Buffalo) and drafted Cooper Kupp as a slot and Josh Reynolds as an outside, vertical threat. They also selected South Alabama tight end Gerald Everett in the second round, and he can run. ... Keep an eye on sixth-round choice Sam Rogers as a fullback. He has hands and is a willing blocker. ... Aaron Donald is one of the 10 best players in the entire league. He is super quick, gives effort and can finish at the quarterback. ... Robert Quinn is trending the wrong way, and Alec Ogletree misses too many tackles. ... Cornerback Trumaine Johnson is under the franchise tag again, pending a new deal by July 15. ... Free safety Mo Alexander has been a nice find, and rookie John Johnson might see the field as a nickel/dime player very quickly."

Everett: AP; Quinn: Peter Brouillet



RAMS IN THE *DRAFT*

C-

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
2.	**Gerald Everett**	**TE**	**6-3**	**239**	**South Alabama**
3.	Cooper Kupp	WR	6-2	204	Eastern Washington
3.	John Johnson	DB	6-0	208	Boston College
4.	Josh Reynolds	WR	6-3	194	Texas A&M
4.	Samson Ebukam	OLB	6-3	240	Eastern Washington
6.	Tanzel Smart	DT	6-1	296	Tulane
6.	Sam Rogers	FB	5-10	231	Virginia Tech
7.	Ejuan Price	DE	5-11	241	Pittsburgh

With so much draft capital spent on last year's trade for Jared Goff, the Rams desperately needed to surround their young quarterback with weapons on offense, but they had little room for error. Gerald Everett, another athletic, small-school tight end, was a questionable response to that need, but he should fit Sean McVay's tight end-heavy scheme. A sure-handed wideout who runs quality routes, Cooper Kupp will also contribute immediately, and Josh Reynolds, at 6'3", might step in as the Rams' best red-zone threat on Day 1. But the Rams' second draft class in Los Angeles isn't exactly replete with future stars. After boasting one of the NFL's worst offensive lines last year, they didn't address the position at all. On defense, third-round safety John Johnson may be the only player who gets a look on the two-deep this season.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

EVOLVING UNIFORMS The new L.A. Rams planned to rebrand eventually, but after fans begged for a taste of the team's throwback, Fearsome Foursome jerseys, the Rams decided to compromise. More than 90,000 fans voted over a 48-hour period to bring back the team's classic white-horned navy helmet, with a white facemask. The jersey still contains gold, but a full rebrand is still coming in 2019, when they'll likely go entirely blue-and-white.

McVAY'S MENTORS Close your eyes and listen to Sean McVay speak, and you might mistake him for another, more experienced NFL coach who was also known for commanding a room. That'd be Jon Gruden, who gave McVay his first job in Tampa Bay and has remained his most influential mentor. But Gruden is hardly his only influence. There's his grandfather, John McVay, who crafted the 49ers dynasty of the 1980s and '90s. Then, there's Mike Shanahan, the two-time Super Bowl winner, who also hired McVay.

WHO LOVES SHORT SHORTS? Seventh-round pick Ejuan Price is mostly known as a former teammate of Rams All-Pro defensive tackle Aaron Donald. But at Pittsburgh, where he racked up 29.5 sacks, the defensive end has a reputation for football fashion. Football pants are supposed to fall just before the knee, but Price often wore his as short as humanly possible. He'll have to lose that look in the NFL, where the uniform rules are strict. Luckily, he has a massive shoe collection to fall back on.

GOFF SEES A GURU L.A.-based quarterback guru Tom House already has a star-studded client list that includes Tom Brady, Matt Ryan and Drew Brees. This offseason, he added another, less proven client: Jared Goff. Goff certainly could use some fixing. With House, he'll work on correcting some of the minor technical issues that plagued his seven starts. A guru can't fix the Rams' offensive line issues, though.

HOOP, THERE IT IS Gerald Everett didn't play football until his final year of high school, before enrolling at South Alabama — a program that, in nine years, had never had a player drafted. But that didn't stop the Rams from picking Everett at No. 44 overall. It was the culmination of a four-year stretch in which he went from Bethune-Cookman to Hutchinson (Kan.) Community College to UAB to South Alabama.

@SONOFBUM Wade Phillips began his NFL coaching career in 1976, a full decade before McVay, the Rams' 31-year-old head coach, would even be born. That age gap hasn't kept the Rams' new defensive coordinator from outdoing younger coaches on social media. Phillips is pushing 70, but he's a budding star on Twitter, where he has thrown shade at other teams and even poked fun at his head coach's age.

CROSSTOWN TRAFFIC The Chargers move to Los Angeles this offseason, putting the league's two most recently relocated franchises within 12 miles of each other. In a city known for its atrocious traffic, that presents a unique problem. The NFL schedule could only do so much to contain it. The two teams will share L.A. on three occasions this season (Sept. 17, Dec. 10, Dec. 31). For Angelenos, that means avoiding the 405 Freeway like the plague.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

8.1 The Rams ranked 29th in the NFL in Adjusted Sack Rate, allowing 8.1 percent of their pass snaps to become sacks.

52.4 The Rams punted on a league-high 52.4 percent of their offensive drives.

29 The Rams stopped a league-high 29 percent of runs against them for no gain or a loss.

ROBERT QUINN

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

NFC WEST FORECAST

4

Another year, another head coach for the San Francisco 49ers. After pushing Jim Harbaugh out the door after the 2014 season in a messy breakup, the 49ers turned to Jim Tomsula in 2015, Chip Kelly in '16 and now Kyle Shanahan, who spent the past two seasons as Atlanta's offensive coordinator. Only this time, the 49ers added a twist: They also fired longtime general manager Trent Baalke and hired John Lynch.

Shanahan, 37, has never been a head coach at any level. Lynch, 45, played 16 years as a safety in the NFL and spent the past eight years as a football analyst for Fox Sports, but he has never been an NFL general manager or held a front-office job.

San Francisco CEO Jed York, however, signed both to six-year contracts and appears willing to give them time to resurrect what was once one of the NFL's elite franchises.

"I believe in these guys and I think they're going to be here a lot longer than that," York said at their introductory press conference.

Shanahan and Lynch will need time to fix what's gone so wrong for the 49ers. The 49ers sank to 5–11 under Tomsula and 2–14 last year under Kelly.

OFFENSE Shanahan's No. 1 job will be to get the offense back on track after it veered so far off course. Shanahan didn't hire an offensive coordinator. He'll handle that job and call the plays, as he did in Atlanta. Last year the Falcons ranked second in the NFL in total offense, third in passing and fifth in rushing. Of course, Shanahan won't have Julio Jones, Matt Ryan or any of Atlanta's other offensive stars to work with this year.

The 49ers parted ways with quarterback Colin Kaepernick and signed journeyman Brian Hoyer, who started 13 games for the Cleveland Browns in 2014 when Shanahan was their offensive coordinator. Hoyer has 31 career NFL starts in eight seasons, including five last year for Chicago. He will be a placeholder at the position until the 49ers acquire or develop a franchise quarterback, but he's familiar with Shanahan's offense, and Shanahan likes his work ethic, fearlessness in the pocket and ability to run his scheme.

The 49ers bolstered what was one of the NFL's weakest receiving corps last year by signing three wideouts on the first day of free agency: Pierre Garçon (Washington), Marquise Goodwin (Buffalo) and Aldrick Robinson (Atlanta). Garçon, who's in his 10th NFL season, had career highs for catches (113) and receiving yards (1,346) for Washington in 2013 when Shanahan was his offensive coordinator. Goodwin, drafted by Buffalo in the third round in 2013, had 29 catches for 431 yards last year, both career highs. The 49ers also re-signed wide receiver Jeremy Kerley, who's coming off a career year. San Francisco added tight end Logan Paulsen to an unspectacular group that includes Vance McDonald, Garrett Celek and Blake Bell. McDonald was shopped during the draft and could be on his way out.

Left tackle Joe Staley, a five-time Pro Bowl pick, will anchor an offensive line that helped the 49ers rank fourth in rushing last season. Left guard Zane Beadles, a seven-year pro who made the Pro Bowl with Denver in 2012, had a solid first season with the 49ers after signing as a free agent. The 49ers added center Jeremy Zuttah, a nine-year veteran coming off his first Pro Bowl, in a trade with Baltimore and signed center Tim Barnes, who started the past two seasons for the Rams. Returning starting center Daniel Kilgore is also in the mix at center and could also add depth at guard. Right guard Joshua Garnett, a first-round pick in 2016, started 11 games as a rookie and struggled at times. Right tackle Trent Brown could get pushed by free-agent pickup Garry Gilliam, who started 30 games in three seasons with Seattle.

Running back Carlos Hyde rushed for a career-high 988 yards on 217 carries last season but missed two games with a shoulder injury and the finale with a torn MCL. He missed nine games in 2015. The 49ers added fullback Kyle Juszczyk, who caught 78 passes the past two years for Baltimore, and tailback Tim Hightower (New Orleans).

THE ORGANIZATION

CO-CHAIRPERSONS: Denise DeBartolo York, John York
CEO: Jed York
GENERAL MANAGER: John Lynch
CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER/EVP OF FOOTBALL OPERATIONS: Paraag Marathe
STADIUM: Levi's Stadium (68,500)
SURFACE: Tifway II Bermuda Grass
WEBSITE: www.49ers.com
TICKETS: 1-415- 464-9377
TRAINING CAMP: San Francisco 49ers Complex (Santa Clara, Calif.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Kyle Shanahan
RECORD WITH TEAM: 0–0
CAREER RECORD: 0–0
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Robert Saleh
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Richard Hightower
ASSISTANT HEAD COACH/TIGHT ENDS: Jon Embree
QUARTERBACKS: Rich Scangarello
RUNNING BACKS: Robert Turner Jr.
WIDE RECEIVERS: Mike LaFleur
OFFENSIVE LINE: John Benton
DEFENSIVE LINE: Jeff Zgonina
LINEBACKERS: Johnny Holland
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Jeff Hafley

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2017 SCHEDULE / 2016 NFL RANKINGS

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
Sept. 10	Carolina	4:25	6-10	343.7 (19)	359.8 (21)	23.1 (15)	25.1 (26)
Sept. 17	at Seattle	4:25	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Sept. 21	L.A. Rams (Thu.)	8:25	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Oct. 1	at Arizona	4:05	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Oct. 8	at Indianapolis	1:00	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Oct. 15	at Washington	1:00	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Oct. 22	Dallas	4:05	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Oct. 29	at Philadelphia	1:00	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Nov. 5	Arizona	4:05	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Nov. 12	N.Y. Giants	4:25	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
BYE							
Nov. 26	Seattle	4:05	10-5-1	357.2 (12)	318.7 (5)	22.1 (18t)	18.3 (3)
Dec. 3	at Chicago	1:00	3-13	356.5 (15)	346.8 (15)	17.4 (28t)	24.9 (24)
Dec. 10	at Houston	1:00	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Dec. 17	Tennessee	4:25	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Dec. 24	Jacksonville	4:05	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Dec. 31	at L.A. Rams	4:25	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)

Grant Halverson/Getty Images

RB CARLOS HYDE

2016 RESULTS (2-14)

Sept. 12	L.A. Rams	W	28-0
Sept. 18	at Carolina	L	27-46
Sept. 25	at Seattle	L	18-37
Oct. 2	Dallas	L	17-24
Oct. 6	Arizona	L	21-33
Oct. 16	at Buffalo	L	16-45
Oct. 23	Tampa Bay	L	17-34
Nov. 6	New Orleans	L	23-41
Nov. 13	at Arizona	L	20-23
Nov. 20	New England	L	17-30
Nov. 27	at Miami	L	24-31
Dec. 4	at Chicago	L	6-26
Dec. 11	N.Y. Jets (ot)	L	17-23
Dec. 18	at Atlanta	L	13-41
Dec. 24	at L.A. Rams	W	22-21
Jan. 1	Seattle	L	23-25

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

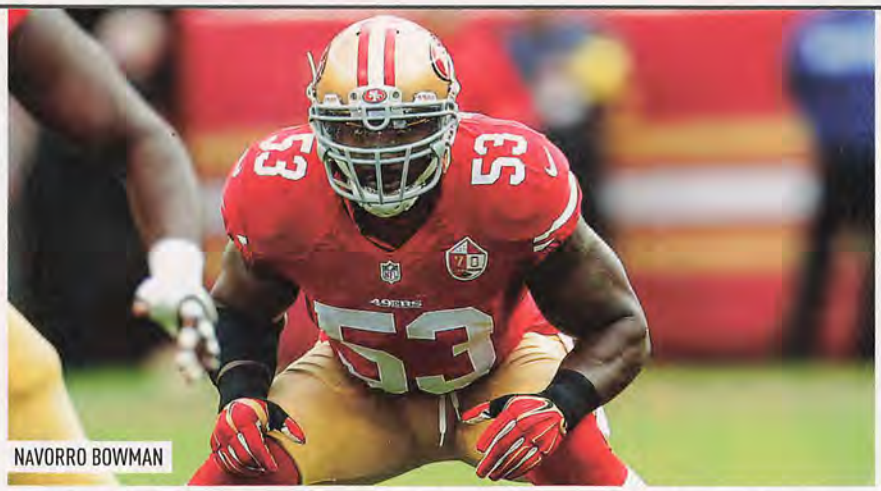
PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Colin Kaepernick	331	196	2,241	16	4
Blaine Gabbert	160	91	925	5	6
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Carlos Hyde	217	988	4.6	6	
Colin Kaepernick	69	468	6.8	2	
Shaun Draughn	74	196	2.6	4	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Jeremy Kerley	64	667	10.4	3	
Quinton Patton	37	408	11.0	0	
Garrett Celek	29	350	12.1	3	
Shaun Draughn	29	263	9.1	2	
Carlos Hyde	27	163	6.0	3	

KICKING: Phil Dawson, 18-21 FGs, 33-34 PAT, 87 points
TACKLES: Antoine Bethea, 110; Two players tied with 83
SACKS: Ahmad Brooks, 6.0; DeForest Buckner, 6.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Gerald Hodges, 2; Eight players tied with 1

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	308.1	31	15
Rushing	126.2	4	2
Passing	181.9	32	16
Scoring	19.3	27	14
Third Down %	35.1	30	15
Punt Returns	9.4	10	7
Kick Returns	19.7	T24	T14

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	406.4	32	16
Rushing	165.9	32	16
Passing	240.5	14	7
Scoring	30.0	32	16
Interceptions	10	T23	T11
Sacks	33	T19	13
Turnover Differential	-5	T24	14


NAVORRO BOWMAN

DEFENSE The 49ers ranked last in total defense and rushing defense and 14th against the pass last season. They gave up the most rushing yards (2,654) and rushing touchdowns (25) in franchise history. It's safe to say that former Jacksonville Jaguars linebackers coach Robert Saleh faces a huge challenge in his first job as a defensive coordinator at any level. Saleh spent three seasons as a defensive quality control coach for Seattle Seahawks coach Pete Carroll and the past three as a linebackers coach at Jacksonville under Gus Bradley, Carroll's former defensive coordinator. Saleh will install a version of Carroll's attacking 4-3 defense and scrap the 3-4 that San Francisco has used for years. "Moving forward, stopping the run is our No. 1 priority," Saleh says. "The way we align, our demeanor, the responsibility of the defensive players, we will stop the run on this defense."

Saleh got some help for his defense when the 49ers drafted defensive end Solomon Thomas and linebacker Reuben Foster in the first round. The return of inside linebacker NaVorro Bowman, a four-time All-Pro, should be a huge help, too, especially against the run. Bowman missed the entire 2014 season with a knee injury and the final 12 games last season with a torn Achilles tendon. The 49ers also added linebacker Malcolm Smith and nose tackle Earl Mitchell in free agency.

Outside linebacker Ahmad Brooks will spend most of his time in Saleh's system close to the line of scrimmage in attack mode, which suits his skill set. Brooks has 51.5 sacks in his eight full seasons with the 49ers. The 49ers invested first-round draft picks on former Oregon defensive linemen Arik Armstead in 2015 and DeForest Buckner in 2016. Buckner, who had 73 tackles and six sacks as a rookie, and Armstead are versatile enough to play inside or out and should thrive in an aggressive one-gap scheme. Thomas will likely play end in the base defense then move inside in the nickel, next to Buckner. Once Armstead fully recovers from shoulder surgery, he'll likely get a shot to start at right end. Aaron Lynch could revive his career as a defensive end in Saleh's scheme after missing the first four games last year for violating the NFL's substance abuse policy and five games with an ankle injury. Lynch had a combined 12.5 sacks in 2014 and '15.

Eric Reid, who missed the final six games last season with a torn biceps, will move from free to strong safety, where he'll be able to make a bigger impact against the run. A Pro Bowl pick in 2013 as a rookie, Reid will replace Antoine Bethea, who signed as a free agent with Arizona. Jimmie Ward is the prime candidate to roam center field as the 49ers' single-high safety, although he might be needed at cornerback. The 49ers released starting cornerback Tramaine Brock on April 7 after he was arrested in Santa Clara for domestic violence. Cornerback Rashard Robinson, a 2016 fourth-round pick out of LSU, started six games as a rookie last season and will likely open this season as a starter. Dontae Johnson is another candidate to start, as is rookie Ahkello Witherspoon, a third-round pick out of Colorado.

SPECIALISTS Phil Dawson signed with Arizona as a free agent, and the 49ers replaced him with veteran Robbie Gould. Gould made all 10 of his field goal attempts last season for the Giants, including two in the playoffs. He spent his first 11 seasons with the Bears. Bradley Pinion had a league-leading 100 punts, but he averaged just 44.0 yards, tied for 26th, with a net of 39.8, tied for 20th. The return of Bruce Ellington, who missed last season with a torn hamstring, could boost an anemic return game. He averaged 25.6 yards on 26 kickoff returns in 2015. Last year, Kerley averaged 7.5 yards on 21 punt returns.

FINAL ANALYSIS Under Shanahan and Lynch, there's hope for a brighter future, but it looks to be a long rebuilding job. The 49ers could triple their number of wins from last year, but they won't be serious playoff contenders until they find a long-term answer at quarterback and significantly raise the level of talent on both sides of the ball.

Michael Zagaris/San Francisco 49ers/Getty Images

2017 VETERAN 49ERS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
7 Barkley, Matt	QB	6-2	227	4	USC	FA-Chi-17	D4-Phi-13
2 Hoyer, Brian	QB	6-2	215	8	Michigan State	FA-Chi-17	FA-NE-09
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
38 Bibbs, Kapri	RB	5-11	203	2	Colorado State	T-Den-17	FA-Den-14
32 Harris, DuJuan	RB	5-7	206	3	Troy	FA-15	FA-Jac-11
22 Hightower, Tim	RB	6-0	220	6	Richmond	FA-NO-17	D5-Ari-08
28 Hyde, Carlos	RB	6-0	235	3	Ohio State	D2-14	D2-SF-14
44 Juszczyk, Kyle	FB	6-1	240	4	Harvard	FA-Bal-17	D4b-Bal-13
31 Mostert, Raheem	RB	5-10	197	2	Purdue	FA-16	FA-Phi-15
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
84 Bell, Blake	TE	6-6	252	2	Oklahoma	D4a-15	D4a-SF-15
13 Burbridge, Aaron	WR	6-1	208	1	Michigan State	D6c-16	D6c-SF-16
83 Campbell, DiAndre	WR	6-2	206	1	Washington	FA-15	FA-SF-15
4 Carter, DeAndre	WR	5-8	190	1	Sacramento State	FA-17	FA-Bal-15
88 Celek, Garrett	TE	6-5	252	5	Michigan State	FA-12	FA-SF-12
10 Ellington, Bruce	WR	5-9	197	3	South Carolina	D4-14	D4-SF-14
15 Garçon, Pierre	WR	6-0	211	9	Mount Union	FA-Was-17	D6-Ind-08
11 Goodwin, Marquise	WR	5-9	179	3	Texas	FA-Buf-17	D3-Buf-13
17 Kerley, Jeremy	WR	5-9	188	6	TCU	T-Det-16	D5-NYJ-11
89 McDonald, Vance	TE	6-4	267	4	Rice	D2b-13	D2b-SF-13
82 Paulsen, Logan	TE	6-5	268	7	UCLA	FA-Chi-17	FA-Was-10
19 Robinson, Aldrick	WR	5-10	187	4	SMU	FA-Atl-17	D6-Was-11
14 Ross, Rashad	WR	6-0	180	3	Arizona State	FA-17	FA-Ten-13
18 Smelter, DeAndre	WR	6-2	227	1	Georgia Tech	D4c-15	D4c-SF-15
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
61 Barnes, Tim	C	6-4	306	5	Missouri	FA-LAR-17	FA-Bal-11
68 Beadles, Zane	G	6-4	305	7	Utah	FA-16	D2-Den-10
77 Brown, Trent	OL	6-8	355	2	Florida	D7a-15	D7a-SF-15
63 Fusco, Brandon	G	6-4	306	6	Slippery Rock	FA-Min-17	D6c-Min-11
65 Garnett, Joshua	G	6-5	321	1	Stanford	D1b-16	D1b-SF-16
76 Gilliam, Garry	T	6-5	315	3	Penn State	FA-Sea-17	FA-Sea-14
76 Kelly, Colin	OL	6-5	315	2	Oregon State	FA-16	FA-KC-13
67 Kilgore, Daniel	C/G	6-3	308	6	Appalachian State	D5-11	D5-SF-11
78 Price, Norman	OL	6-4	311	1	Southern Miss	FA-16	FA-SF-16
74 Staley, Joe	T	6-5	315	10	Central Michigan	D1b-07	D1b-SF-07
71 Theus, John	OL	6-6	303	1	Georgia	D5b-16	D5b-SF-16
58 Zuttah, Jeremy	G/C	6-4	300	9	Rutgers	T-Bal-17	D3-TB-08
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
91 Armstead, Arik	DL	6-7	292	2	Oregon	D1-15	D1-SF-15
98 Blair, Ronald	DL	6-4	270	1	Appalachian State	D5a-16	D5a-SF-16
99 Buckner, DeForest	DL	6-7	300	1	Oregon	D1a-16	D1a-SF-16
92 Dial, Quinton	DT	6-5	318	4	Alabama	D5-13	D5-SF-13
93 Jones, Chris	DT	6-1	293	4	Bowling Green	W-Mia-16	D6-Hou-13
59 Lynch, Aaron	DL	6-6	270	3	South Florida	D5a-14	D5a-SF-14
90 Mitchell, Earl	DT	6-3	310	7	Arizona	FA-Mia-17	D3-Hou-10
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
54 Armstrong, Ray-Ray	LB	6-3	220	4	Miami	W-Oak-15	FA-LAR-13
53 Bowman, NaVorro	LB	6-0	242	7	Penn State	D3-10	D3-SF-10
55 Brooks, Ahmad	LB	6-3	259	11	Virginia	W-Cin-08	FA-Cin-08
95 Carradine, Tank	LB	6-4	270	4	Florida State	D2a-13	D2a-SF-13
50 Coyle, Brock	LB	6-1	245	3	Montana	FA-Sea-17	FA-Sea-14
58 Harold, Eli	LB	6-3	265	2	Virginia	D3-15	D3-SF-15
51 Smith, Malcolm	LB	6-0	225	6	USC	FA-Oak-17	D7-Sea-11
45 Watson, Dekoda	LB	6-2	240	7	Florida State	FA-Den-17	D7-TB-10
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
30 Iworah, Prince Charles	CB	5-11	193	1	Western Kentucky	D7-16	D7-SF-16
36 Johnson, Dontae	CB	6-2	200	3	NC State	D4b-14	D4b-SF-14
20 Jones, Don	S	5-11	195	4	Arkansas State	FA-Hou-17	D7-Mia-13
27 Reaser, Keith	CB	6-0	190	2	Florida Atlantic	D5b-14	D5b-SF-14
23 Redmond, Will	CB	6-0	186	1	Mississippi State	D3-16	D3-SF-16
35 Reid, Eric	S	6-1	213	4	LSU	D1-13	D1-SF-13
33 Robinson, Rashard	CB	6-1	177	1	LSU	D4-16	D4-SF-16
40 Sunseri, Vinnie	S	6-0	210	3	Alabama	FA-16	D5-NO-14
29 Tartt, Jaquiski	S	6-1	221	2	Samford	D2-15	D2-SF-15
25 Ward, Jimmie	DB	5-11	193	3	Northern Illinois	D1-14	D1-SF-14
24 Williams, K'Waun	CB	5-9	183	2	Pittsburgh	FA-17	FA-Cle-14
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
9 Gould, Robbie	K	6-0	190	12	Penn State	FA-NYG-17	FA-NE-05
86 Nelson, Kyle	LS	6-2	240	5	New Mexico State	FA-14	FA-NO-11
5 Pinion, Bradley	P	6-5	229	2	Clemson	D5-15	D5-SF-15
6 Rose, Nick	K	6-2	190	1	Texas	FA-17	FA-Atl-16

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	15	Pierre Garçon	19	Aldrick Robinson
WR	11	Marquise Goodwin	17	Jeremy Kerley
LT	74	Joe Staley	71	John Theus
LG	68	Zane Beadles	67	Daniel Kilgore
C	58	Jeremy Zuttah	61	Tim Barnes
RG	65	Joshua Garnett	63	Brandon Fusco
RT	77	Trent Brown	76	Garry Gilliam
TE	82	Logan Paulsen	89	Vance McDonald
QB	2	Brian Hoyer	7	Matt Barkley
FB	44	Kyle Juszczyk		
RB	28	Carlos Hyde	22	Tim Hightower

DEFENSE

DE	96	Solomon Thomas (R)	98	Ronald Blair
DT	90	Earl Mitchell	66	D.J. Jones (R)
DT	99	DeForest Buckner	92	Quinton Dial
DE	91	Erik Armstead	59	Aaron Lynch
SLB	55	Ahmad Brooks	58	Eli Harold
MLB	53	NaVorro Bowman	54	Ray-Ray Armstrong
WLB	56	Reuben Foster (R)	51	Malcolm Smith
CB	36	Dontae Johnson	41	Ahkello Witherspoon (R)
CB	33	Rashard Robinson	27	Keith Reaser
SS	35	Eric Reid	29	Jaquiski Tartt
FS	25	Jimmie Ward	29	Jaquiski Tartt

SPECIALISTS

K	9	Robbie Gould	KR	10	Bruce Ellington
P	5	Bradley Pinion	PR	17	Jeremy Kerley

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
WR	Pierre Garçon	Washington
WR	Marquise Goodwin	Buffalo
K	Robbie Gould	N.Y. Giants
RB	Tim Hightower	New Orleans
QB	Brian Hoyer	Chicago
FB	Kyle Juszczyk	Baltimore
DT	Earl Mitchell	Miami
TE	Logan Paulsen	Chicago
C	Jeremy Zuttah	Baltimore

KEY LOSSES

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
S	Antoine Bethea	Arizona
CB	Tramaine Brock	Free Agent
K	Phil Dawson	Arizona
QB	Colin Kaepernick	Free Agent
WR	Quinton Patton	N.Y. Jets
WR	Torrey Smith	Philadelphia
LB	Michael Wilhoite	Seattle

SCOUTING THE 49ers

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP SAN FRANCISCO "The 49ers hit rock bottom in every sense of the word in 2016. Chip Kelly had zero chance of improving the team because he inherited only marginal talent across the board. ... Left tackle Joe Staley is the NFC equivalent of the Browns' Joe Thomas. All he does is show up and do his job regardless of what is going on around him. ... They signed Brian Hoyer and Matt Barkley from the Bears to serve as the bridge quarterbacks while they reshape the rest of the roster. ... John Lynch showed his aplomb as a rookie GM by landing two of the five best defensive players in the 2017 draft (defensive end Solomon Thomas and linebacker Reuben Foster). ... Carlos Hyde is a capable runner, but they are excited about fourth-round pick Joe Williams, who brings rare speed to the table. ... When Jeremy Kerley is your leading receiver, that speaks volumes about the wide receiver unit and overall quarterback play. They signed Pierre Garçon and Marquise Goodwin in free agency, and keep tabs on rookie Trent Taylor. He is a dynamo of a player as a slot man and returner. ... The offensive line is subpar with Zane Beadles, Josh Garnett and Trent Brown all playing 'below the line.' ... DeForest Buckner had a better-than-advertised season with six sacks, and linebacker Gerald Hodges had 83 tackles in 12 starts. ... The hope is that NaVorro Bowman will be back from an Achilles injury and ready for the opener. ... They need more from Eric Reid at safety, and the corner spots are wide open. ... This organization is starting over, so there won't be many wins in 2017."

49ERS IN THE *DRAFT*

A

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
1.	**Solomon Thomas**	**DE**	**6-3**	**273**	**Stanford**
1.	Reuben Foster	LB	6-0	229	Alabama
3.	Ahkello Witherspoon	CB	6-3	198	Colorado
3.	C.J. Beathard	QB	6-2	219	Iowa
4.	Joe Williams	RB	5-11	201	Utah
5.	George Kittle	TE	6-4	247	Iowa
5.	Trent Taylor	WR	5-8	181	Louisiana Tech
6.	D.J. Jones	DT	6-1	319	Ole Miss
6.	Pita Taumoepenu	OLB	6-1	243	Utah
7.	Adrian Colbert	DB	6-2	205	Miami

New general manager John Lynch looked like anything but a rookie when he made his first trade on Day 1 of the NFL Draft. The 49ers traded back one spot, from No. 2 to No. 3, with the Chicago Bears, who gave up third- and fourth-round picks this year and a third-round pick next year to draft North Carolina quarterback Mitch Trubisky. Lynch took defensive end Solomon Thomas, the player he would have taken at No. 2. Then he traded back up into the late first round to take Alabama linebacker Reuben Foster. Thomas and Foster should start as rookies, and Colorado cornerback Ahkello Witherspoon, a third-round pick, has a chance to win a starting job or contribute in the nickel defense. Quarterback C.J. Beathard, according to some draft analysts, was a reach in the third round, but coach Kyle Shanahan liked what he saw on tape. Running back Joe Williams could contribute as a rookie, and he gives the 49ers some insurance with Carlos Hyde approaching the final year of his contract. Tight end George Kittle has the blocking and receiving skills to earn some playing time as a rookie.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

49ERS ROOTS New coach Kyle Shanahan's connection to the 49ers goes back to when he was in the sixth grade and his father, former Broncos, Redskins and Raiders coach Mike Shanahan, began a three-year stint as San Francisco's offensive coordinator from 1992-94. "I had three good years here, and I have a very high expectation of what I've always thought this franchise is and that it was the best franchise in sports," Kyle Shanahan says. Shanahan has fond memories of spending training camp with the 49ers at Sierra College in the central California city of Rocklin. He had a rollout bed in his father's dorm room and was a ball boy for the offensive line. "I remember staying up every night playing ping pong with (former 49ers wide receiver) John Taylor," Shanahan says. "It took me two years to beat him, and then after I did, he finally told me he was going to start using his right hand."

LEAD BY EXAMPLE Shanahan was Washington's offensive coordinator in 2013 when wide receiver Pierre Garçon led the NFL in receptions with 113 for 1,346 yards and five touchdowns. So it came as little surprise when the 49ers signed Garçon as a free agent. "I've always loved Pierre just because of how angry he plays," Shanahan says. "He gives you his all. He plays extremely aggressive. Pierre's not going to say much, but you know he's going to go out there and fight every single play no matter what the situation is, whether it's run or pass."

BACK TO SCHOOL Defensive end Solomon Thomas met John Lynch long before the 49ers rookie general manager drafted him at No. 3 in the first round this year. The two were classmates at Stanford in 2014 when Lynch returned to college that summer. "He was in there every day taking notes, front row," Thomas says of Lynch. "He was at every tutoring session. He motivated me to be a better student." That connection made Lynch's decision to draft Thomas easier. "When I think of Solomon, I think of speed and quickness and disruption," Lynch says. "And then I know the kid." Thomas kept in touch with Lynch after their time together at Stanford and sought his advice at times for help on the football field.

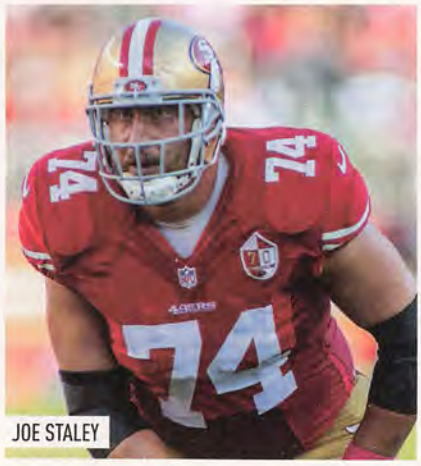
FOOTBALL FAMILY Rookie quarterback C.J. Beathard, a third-round pick out of Iowa, got some sage advice from his grandfather, former NFL general manager Bobby Beathard, about how to approach the NFL Draft. "He told me to stay positive and you never know what's going to happen on draft day," C.J. Beathard says. Beathard certainly had no idea that the 49ers would trade up and take him late in the third round at No. 104 overall. "He can process and play the game very fast in the pocket, and that gives you a chance to play in the league," Shanahan says. "By no means does that mean he's ready to do that. But that's a great guy you have a chance with. Just throw him in the battle with all these other guys."

NUMBERS TO KNOW

8.4 The 49ers ranked 30th in the NFL in Adjusted Sack Rate, allowing 8.4 percent of their pass snaps to become sacks.

25.4 The 49ers ran the fastest offense in the league, averaging 25.4 seconds per play. That figures to change with Chip Kelly no longer in town.

18.9 The 49ers ranked second to last in the NFL in defensive pressure rate, hurrying the opposing quarterback on just 18.9 percent of passing snaps.



JOE STALEY

Peter Brouillet

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

NFC WEST FORECAST

1

The Seahawks' big push in the offseason was the acquisition of three veteran players to shore up a position area in need of help — just don't ask whether any of these guys can run block or pass protect. While the linebacker corps received a significant manpower boost, Seattle's most pressing concern, its offensive line, remains problematic for a third consecutive season. The situation continues to nag this franchise, last year rendering the ground game ineffective and wasting its often superior defensive resources. It's probably cost them one or two Super Bowl appearances, too.

"I think we got in a position where we probably got a little bit too young," says Seattle general manager John Schneider of his offensive line — in a gross understatement.

The Seahawks' latest response to this dilemma: Sign tackle Luke Joeckel and little-used guard Oday Aboushi and hope for the best from the draft again. No one in Seattle believes this situation has been rectified.

OFFENSE Last season, the Seahawks had the lowest-paid set of blockers in the league, doling out salaries that averaged just over $1 million per man, which in NFL money doesn't buy you much. They trotted out a former basketball player, a former tight end, journeymen, multiple rookies. It showed. Seattle finished 25th out of 32 teams in rushing, averaging a paltry 99.4 yards per game.

Joeckel, the No. 2 overall pick in the 2013 draft, arrives in Seattle coming off a knee injury that limited him to four games in his final season with Jacksonville. Outside of his health setbacks, Joeckel's struggles have been strength-related, in particular his inability to handle the cut-above bull-rusher. The Seahawks believe he'll be an upgrade over George Fant, the one-time basketball forward who started the final 12 games (including postseason) of the 2016 season. Fant's athleticism intrigues Seattle, but he needs time to learn the game. Germain Ifedi, the Seahawks' 2016 first-round pick, will move from right guard to right tackle, but he struggles with fundamentals, especially leverage. Justin Britt, the lone bright spot on the Seattle line after converting to center last season, brings a hefty 6'6", 315-pound frame to his position, plays with attitude and was much more comfortable handling pass-rushers coming up the middle rather than on the corners. At right guard, Aboushi comes to the Seahawks as a well-regarded pass protector but grades out as average in run blocking. Mark Glowinski, overmatched at times as a first-time starter, returns at left guard trying to hang on to his job. Should either guard fail to deliver, look for rookie Ethan Pocic to step in right away; he has good feet to go with a huge frame.

All of this upheaval up front has put quarterback Russell Wilson at unnecessary risk, which has been a good and a bad thing. The downside was he got hurt a couple of times, nearly to the point he couldn't play. The upside? Wilson demonstrated superior toughness and refused to come out of the lineup, and he showed he could be a comfortable pocket passer rather than just a wildly innovative scrambler. He came up with an uneven season, throwing for a career-best 4,219 yards but tossing only 21 TD passes, one off his career low. The Seahawks can't continue to give Wilson, who has directed this team to the playoffs in all five of his seasons, subpar protection and gamble with his health without eventually suffering dire consequences.

The rushing attack is now in the hands of free-agent acquisition Eddie Lacy, whom Seattle is banking on as the second coming of Marshawn Lynch: a big, physical back who underachieved elsewhere before finding his place in Pete Carroll's offense. Unlike Lynch, Lacy deals with continuous weight issues. Thomas Rawls, if he can stay healthy, is a capable alternative with his slashing running style, but he hasn't finished a season with his body intact in two tries.

The Seahawks pass-catching corps has quietly evolved into an elite group, spurred by wide receiver Doug Baldwin's ascension

THE ORGANIZATION

CHAIRMAN: Paul G. Allen
PRESIDENT: Peter McLoughlin
EXECUTIVE VP/GENERAL MANAGER: John Schneider
VP OF FOOTBALL ADMINISTRATION: Matt Thomas
STADIUM: CenturyLink Field (69,000)
SURFACE: FieldTurf Revolution 360
WEBSITE: www.seahawks.com
TICKETS: 1-888-635-4295
TRAINING CAMP: Virginia Mason Athletic Center (Renton, Wash.)

THE COACHES

HEAD COACH: Pete Carroll
RECORD WITH TEAM: 70–41–1
CAREER RECORD: 103–72–1
OFFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Darrell Bevell
DEFENSIVE COORDINATOR: Kris Richard
SPECIAL TEAMS COORDINATOR: Brian Schneider
QUARTERBACKS: Carl Smith
RUNNING BACKS: Chad Morton
WIDE RECEIVERS: Dave Canales
TIGHT ENDS: Pat McPherson
OFFENSIVE LINE: Tom Cable
DEFENSIVE LINE: Clint Hurtt, Dwaine Board
LINEBACKERS: Micheal Barrow
DEFENSIVE BACKS: Andre Curtis
SECONDARY: Nick Sorensen
SENIOR DEFENSIVE ASSISTANT: Travis Jones

FIVE-YEAR WIN TREND

2012	11
2013	13
2014	12
2015	10
2016	10

2017 SCHEDULE

Date	Opponent	Time	2016 Record	Total Offense	Total Defense	Scoring Offense	Scoring Defense
		2016 NFL RANKINGS					
Sept. 10	at Green Bay	4:25	10-6	368.8 (8)	363.9 (22)	27.0 (4)	24.3 (21)
Sept. 17	San Francisco	4:25	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Sept. 24	at Tennessee	4:05	9-7	358.0 (11)	357.5 (20)	23.8 (14)	23.6 (17)
Oct. 1	Indianapolis	8:30	8-8	364.4 (10)	382.9 (30)	25.7 (8)	24.5 (22)
Oct. 8	at L.A. Rams	4:05	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
BYE							
Oct. 22	at N.Y. Giants	4:25	11-5	330.7 (25)	339.7 (10)	19.4 (26)	17.8 (2)
Oct. 29	Houston	4:05	9-7	314.7 (29)	301.3 (1)	17.4 (28t)	20.5 (11)
Nov. 5	Washington	4:05	8-7-1	403.4 (3)	377.9 (28)	24.8 (12)	23.9 (19)
Nov. 9	at Arizona (Thu.)	8:25	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)
Nov. 20	Atlanta (Mon.)	8:30	11-5	415.8 (2)	371.2 (25)	33.8 (1)	25.4 (27)
Nov. 26	at San Francisco	4:05	2-14	308.1 (31)	406.4 (32)	19.3 (27)	30.0 (32)
Dec. 3	Philadelphia	8:30	7-9	337.4 (22)	342.8 (13)	22.9 (16)	20.7 (12)
Dec. 10	at Jacksonville	1:00	3-13	334.9 (23)	321.7 (6)	19.9 (25)	25.0 (25)
Dec. 17	L.A. Rams	4:05	4-12	262.7 (32)	337.0 (9)	14.0 (32)	24.6 (23)
Dec. 24	at Dallas	4:25	13-3	376.7 (5)	343.9 (14)	26.3 (5)	19.1 (5)
Dec. 31	Arizona	4:25	7-8-1	366.8 (9)	305.2 (2)	26.1 (6)	22.6 (14)

QB RUSSELL WILSON

2016 RESULTS (10-5-1)

Sept. 11	Miami	W	12-10
Sept. 18	at L.A. Rams	L	3-9
Sept. 25	San Francisco	W	37-18
Oct. 2	at N.Y. Jets	W	27-17
Oct. 16	Atlanta	W	26-24
Oct. 23	at Arizona (ot)	T	6-6
Oct. 30	at New Orleans	L	20-25
Nov. 7	Buffalo	W	31-25
Nov. 13	at New England	W	31-24
Nov. 20	Philadelphia	W	26-15
Nov. 27	at Tampa Bay	L	5-14
Dec. 4	Carolina	W	40-7
Dec. 11	at Green Bay	L	10-38
Dec. 15	L.A. Rams	W	24-3
Dec. 24	Arizona	L	31-34
Jan. 1	at San Francisco	W	25-23
POSTSEASON			
Jan. 7	Detroit	W	26-6
Jan. 14	at Atlanta	L	20-36

2016 INDIVIDUAL STATS

PASSING	ATT	COMP	YDS	TD	INT
Russell Wilson	546	353	4,219	21	11
Trevone Boykin	18	13	145	1	1
RUSHING	**ATT**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Christine Michael	117	469	4.0	6	
Thomas Rawls	109	349	3.2	3	
Russell Wilson	72	259	3.6	1	
RECEIVING	**REC**	**YDS**	**AVG**	**TD**	
Doug Baldwin	94	1,128	12.0	7	
Jimmy Graham	65	923	14.2	6	
Tyler Lockett	41	597	14.6	1	
Jermaine Kearse	41	510	12.4	1	
Paul Richardson	21	288	13.7	1	

KICKING: Steven Hauschka, 33-37 FGs, 29-35 PAT, 128 points
TACKLES: Bobby Wagner, 167; K.J. Wright, 126
SACKS: Cliff Avril, 11.5; Frank Clark, 10.0
INTERCEPTIONS: Richard Sherman, 4; Two players tied with 2

2016 STATS

Team Offense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	357.2	12	7
Rushing	99.4	25	12
Passing	257.8	10	6
Scoring	22.1	T18	T9
Third Down %	38.2	16	9
Punt Returns	8.3	T17	10
Kick Returns	23.1	10	5

Team Defense	Stat	NFL Rank	NFC Rank
Total	318.7	5	3
Rushing	92.9	7	4
Passing	225.8	8	4
Scoring	18.2	3	2
Interceptions	11	T21	10
Sacks	42	T3	3
Turnover Differential	+1	16	7

K.J. WRIGHT

and tight end Jimmy Graham's inspirational return from a serious injury. Baldwin no longer is underappreciated, running disciplined routes and working well with Wilson. After tearing up a knee, Graham showed no rust in coming back and laying out for difficult catch after catch, turning in a 65-grab season; he put to rest all criticisms that he isn't a good fit for Seattle. Paul Richardson, an acrobatic pass catcher, could unseat starter Jermaine Kearse, whose productivity has fallen. Slot back Tyler Lockett, the team's best deep threat, comes off a knee injury and may need extra time to return to form.

DEFENSE The Seahawks' often fearless defensive unit seemed to lose its intensity when free safety Earl Thomas, the heart and soul of this group, broke his leg 12 games into the season. Thomas and his headhunter approach are back — remember, he ended Rob Gronkowski's 2016 season with a blow to the tight end's chest — and he should restore some of the missing swagger. When together, strong safety Kam Chancellor, cornerback Richard Sherman and Thomas, now in their peak years, still comprise the NFL's No. 1 secondary for their high-end ability to play the run and pass. Sherman, however, was the focus of offseason trade rumors following a tantrum-filled season. He still provides lockdown pass coverage more often than not, but the team seemed willing to listen to offers. He needs to regain the franchise's trust. Another reason Sherman was not dealt: The Seahawks already were down one starting cornerback, with DeShawn Shead out with a knee injury until midseason or later. Seattle was forced to turn the job over to veteran nickel back Jeremy Lane, an adequate starter at best.

The linebacker corps was one place that wasn't screaming for help. The Seahawks boast arguably the NFL's best linebacker duo in Bobby Wagner on the inside and K.J. Wright on the outside. Wagner, smart and fast, went from one of the league's top tacklers to the leader by a wide margin with a franchise-record 167 tackles. He's in his prime. Wright, a rangy and highly instinctive player, came up with a career-best 126 tackles and shows no signs of decline. That didn't stop Seattle from picking up linebackers Arthur Brown, Terence Garvin and Michael Wilhoite in the offseason, with a fourth newcomer, defensive end Dion Jordan, capable of playing outside linebacker.

The Seattle defensive front boasts plenty of star power, too, in Michael Bennett and Cliff Avril. Bennett is widely regarded as one of the league's most disruptive defensive linemen, relying on sheer power to compensate for his compact size. Another plus: He brings the ability to play multiple positions. Avril lacks his teammate's notoriety — he remains one of the NFL's most underrated pass rushers — but he has a first step as effective as any defensive end. Top draft pick Malik McDowell, an explosive player with a long reach, could wrestle one of the inside positions away from an incumbent.

SPECIALISTS After six years of relying on the same kickers, the Seahawks shook things up by letting placekicker Steven Hauschka leave through free agency and picking up Blair Walsh. It was a money move with a short memory. Walsh, ironically, is the guy who shanked a 27-yard field goal in the 2015 playoffs, costing Minnesota a sure win over Seattle, and his inaccuracy prompted the Vikings to release him last season. Steady Jon Ryan, averaging 44 yards per punt, returns for a 10th season with the Seahawks. There could be a big falloff in the return game if Lockett doesn't regain his health right away.

FINAL ANALYSIS For two years now, the Seahawks haven't been able to tell a good offensive lineman from a bad one. They keep plugging just about anyone in there. Seattle has a tremendous defense, a reliable quarterback and proven track record for making the playoffs, but a subpar line continues to ruin everything. If the Seahawks intend to return to Super Bowl form, they need to fix this problem.

2017 VETERAN SEAHAWKS ROSTER

QUARTERBACKS	POS.	HT	WT	EXP	COLLEGE	ACQUIRED	ENTRY
2 Boykin, Trevone	QB	6-0	213	1	TCU	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
5 Heaps, Jake	QB	6-1	217	2	Miami (Fla.)	FA-17	FA-Sea-16
3 Wilson, Russell	QB	5-11	215	5	Wisconsin	D3-12	D3-Sea-12
RUNNING BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
36 Collins, Alex	RB	5-10	217	1	Arkansas	D5b-16	D5b-Sea-16
Cottom, Brandon	FB	6-4	258	3	Purdue	FA-17	FA-Sea-15
39 Farmer, George	RB	6-1	220	2	USC	FA-16	FA-Dal-15
47 Johnson, Malcolm	FB	6-1	231	2	Mississippi State	FA-16	D6-Cle-15
27 Lacy, Eddie	RB	5-11	234	4	Alabama	FA-GB-17	D2-GB-13
38 Madden, Tre	RB	6-0	223	1	USC	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
26 Magee, Terrence	RB	5-9	220	2	LSU	PS-Cle-16	FA-Bal-15
30 McKissic, J.D.	RB	5-10	187	1	Arkansas State	W-Atl-16	FA-Atl-16
43 Pope, Troymaine	RB	5-8	205	1	Jacksonville State	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
22 Prosise, C.J.	RB	6-1	220	1	Notre Dame	D3a-16	D3a-Sea-16
34 Rawls, Thomas	RB	5-9	215	2	Central Michigan	FA-15	FA-Sea-15
37 Taylor, Kelvin	RB	5-10	212	1	Florida	FA-16	D6-SF-16
RECEIVERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
89 Baldwin, Doug	WR	5-10	192	6	Stanford	FA-11	FA-Sea-11
88 Graham, Jimmy	TE	6-7	265	7	Miami	T-NO-15	D3-NO-10
13 Grayson, Cyril	WR	5-9	178	1	LSU	FA-17	FA-Sea-17
15 Kearse, Jermaine	WR	6-1	209	5	Washington	FA-12	FA-Sea-12
11 Lawler, Kenny	WR	6-2	203	1	California	D7a-16	D7a-Sea-16
16 Lockett, Tyler	WR	5-10	182	2	Kansas State	D3-15	D3-Sea-15
85 Lucas, Marcus	TE	6-4	218	3	Missouri	FA-16	FA-Car-14
19 McEvoy, Tanner	WR	6-6	230	1	Wisconsin	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
10 Richardson, Paul	WR	6-0	183	3	Colorado	D2a-14	D2a-Sea-14
81 Vannett, Nick	TE	6-6	257	1	Ohio State	D3b-16	D3b-Sea-16
18 Williams, Kasen	WR	6-1	219	2	Washington	FA-15	FA-Sea-15
82 Willson, Luke	TE	6-5	252	4	Rice	D5-13	D5-Sea-13
OFFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
73 Aboushi, Oday	G	6-5	315	4	Virginia	FA-Hou-17	D5-NYJ-13
68 Britt, Justin	C	6-6	315	3	Missouri	D2b-14	D2b-Sea-14
66 Burbank, Ross	C	6-4	294	1	Virginia	FA-16	FA-Oak-16
74 Fant, George	T	6-5	296	1	Western Kentucky	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
63 Glowinski, Mark	G	6-4	310	2	West Virginia	D4b-15	D4b-Sea-15
53 Hunt, Joey	C	6-2	299	1	TCU	D6-16	D6-Sea-16
78 Joeckel, Luke	T	6-6	306	4	Texas A&M	FA-Jac-17	D1-Jac-13
76 Ifedi, Germain	G/T	6-5	325	1	Texas A&M	D1-16	D1-Sea-16
62 Myers, Robert	T	6-5	329	2	Tennessee State	FA-16	D5-Bal-15
70 Odhiambo, Rees	G	6-4	315	1	Boise State	D3c-16	D3c-Sea-16
75 Pericak, Will	G/C	6-3	300	2	Colorado	FA-15	FA-Bal-13
DEFENSIVE LINEMEN	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
56 Avril, Cliff	DE	6-3	260	9	Purdue	FA-Det-13	D3c-Det-08
72 Bennett, Michael	DE	6-4	274	8	Texas A&M	FA-TB-13	FA-Sea-09
55 Clark, Frank	DE	6-3	260	2	Michigan	D2-15	D2-Sea-15
Clemons, Chris	DE	6-3	254	12	Georgia	FA-Jac-16	FA-Was-03
94 Hamilton, Justin	DT	6-2	315	2	UL Lafayette	FA-15	FA-Buf-15
64 Harris, Tylor	DE	6-3	306	1	Wake Forest	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
99 Jefferson, Quinton	DT	6-4	291	1	Maryland	D5a-16	D5a-Sea-16
67 Jenkins, Shaneil	DT	6-3	284	1	Shepherd	FA-16	FA-Den-16
95 Jordan, Dion	DE	6-6	275	3	Oregon	FA-Mia-17	D1-Mia-13
91 Marsh, Cassius	DE	6-4	245	3	UCLA	D4a-14	D4a-Sea-14
90 Reed, Jarran	DT	6-3	311	1	Alabama	D2-16	D2-Sea-16
77 Rubin, Ahtyba	DT	6-2	310	9	Iowa State	FA-Cle-15	D6a-Cle-08
98 Smith, Garrison	DT	6-1	310	3	Georgia	W-SF-16	FA-Mia-14
LINEBACKERS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
44 Brown, Arthur	LB	6-0	240	4	Kansas State	FA-NYJ-17	D2-Bal-13
51 Garvin, Terence	LB	6-3	235	4	West Virginia	FA-Was-17	FA-Pit-13
41 McDonald, Dewey	LB	6-0	220	3	California (PA)	T-Oak-16	FA-Ind-14
49 Palacio, Kache	LB	6-1	237	1	Washington State	FA-16	FA-LAR-16
58 Pierre-Louis, Kevin	LB	6-0	230	3	Boston College	D4c-14	D4c-Sea-14
59 Powell, Ronald	LB	6-3	247	3	Florida	FA-16	D5-NO-14
54 Wagner, Bobby	LB	6-0	245	5	Utah State	D2-12	D2-Sea-12
52 Wilhoite, Michael	LB	6-0	240	5	Washburn	FA-SF-17	FA-SF-11
50 Wright, K.J.	LB	6-4	246	6	Mississippi State	D4a-11	D4a-Sea-11
DEFENSIVE BACKS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
31 Chancellor, Kam	SS	6-3	225	7	Virginia Tech	D5-10	D5-Sea-10
28 Desir, Pierre	FS	6-1	198	3	Lindenwood	FA-16	D4-Cle-14
21 Elliott, DeAndre	CB	6-1	189	1	Colorado State	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
20 Lane, Jeremy	CB	6-0	190	5	Northwestern St.	D6a-12	D6a-Sea-12
30 McDougald, Bradley	S	6-1	209	4	Kansas	FA-TB-17	FA-KC-13
35 Shead, DeShawn	DB	6-2	212	5	Portland State	FA-12	FA-Sea-12
25 Sherman, Richard	CB	6-3	195	6	Stanford	D5a-11	D5a-Sea-11
29 Thomas, Earl	FS	5-10	202	7	Texas	D1b-10	D1b-Sea-10
27 Thorpe, Neiko	CB	6-2	198	4	Auburn	FA-16	FA-KC-12
SPECIALISTS	**POS**	**HT**	**WT**	**EXP**	**COLLEGE**	**ACQUIRED**	**ENTRY**
48 Frese, Nolan	LS	6-2	233	1	Houston	FA-16	FA-Sea-16
4 Lunsford, John	K	6-1	180	1	Liberty	FA-17	FA-SF-16
69 Ott, Tyler	LS	6-3	253	2	Harvard	FA-16	FA-NE-14
9 Ryan, Jon	P	6-0	217	11	Regina	FA-08	FA-GB-06
7 Walsh, Blair	K	5-10	187	5	Georgia	FA-17	D6-Min-12

OFFSEASON DEPTH CHART

OFFENSE

WR	89	Doug Baldwin	19	Tanner McEvoy
WR	10	Paul Richardson	15	Jermaine Kearse
SB	16	Tyler Lockett	18	Kasen Williams
LT	78	Luke Joeckel	74	George Fant
LG	63	Mark Glowinski	70	Rees Odhiambo
C	68	Justin Britt	53	Joey Hunt
RG	73	Oday Aboushi		Ethan Pocic (R)
RT	76	Germain Ifedi	74	George Fant
TE	88	Jimmy Graham	82	Luke Willson
QB	3	Russell Wilson	2	Trevone Boykin
RB	27	Eddie Lacy	34	Thomas Rawls

DEFENSE

DE	72	Michael Bennett	91	Cassius Marsh
DT	77	Ahtyba Rubin		Malik McDowell (R)
DT	90	Jarran Reed		Nazair Jones (R)
DE	56	Cliff Avril	55	Frank Clark
OLB	52	Michael Wilhoite	44	Arthur Brown
MLB	54	Bobby Wagner	51	Terence Garvin
OLB	50	K.J. Wright	58	Kevin Pierre-Louis
CB	25	Richard Sherman	27	Neiko Thorpe
CB	20	Jeremy Lane	35	DeShawn Shead
SS	31	Kam Chancellor		Tedric Thompson (R)
FS	29	Earl Thomas	30	Bradley McDougald

SPECIALISTS

K	7	Blair Walsh	KR	16	Tyler Lockett
P	9	Jon Ryan	PR	15	Jermaine Kearse

PLAYER MOVEMENT

KEY ADDITIONS +

POS.	PLAYER	2016 TEAM
OG	Oday Aboushi	Houston
LB	Arthur Brown	N.Y. Jets
LB	Terence Garvin	Washington
OL	Luke Joeckel	Jacksonville
DE	Dion Jordan	Miami
RB	Eddie Lacy	Green Bay
S	Bradley McDougald	Tampa Bay
PK	Blair Walsh	Minnesota
LB	Michael Wilhoite	San Francisco

KEY LOSSES −

POS.	PLAYER	2017 TEAM
LB	Brock Coyle	San Francisco
OL	Garry Gilliam	San Francisco
PK	Steven Hauschka	Buffalo
DL	Tony McDaniel	Free Agent
OL	Bradley Sowell	Chicago

SCOUTING THE SEAHAWKS

OPPOSING SCOUTS SIZE UP SEATTLE "The Seahawks will be in the mix as long as Pete Carroll and Russell Wilson are the faces of the organization. ... Carroll and GM John Schneider create a competitive environment that is focused on players with something to prove. ... They are expecting Eddie Lacy to spark their running game after he faltered in Green Bay. ... Jimmy Graham has rare physical traits, and I expect him and Wilson to increase their production in 2017. ... You cannot credit Doug Baldwin enough; he has become their go-to guy and caught 94 passes last year. ... The offensive line is the Achilles heel of the operation, and they probably lean on coach Tom Cable too much. He's good, but this isn't a lemonade stand. Justin Britt played well in the middle, but Mark Glowinski and Germaine Ifedi struggled all year. ... Linebacker Bobby Wagner is arguably their best defensive player. He's tough, consistent and stays on the field. ... Cliff Avril and Frank Clark provide the pass rush, while Ahtyba Rubin, Jarran Reed and rookie second-round pick Malik McDowell are expected to control the interior. McDowell is a boom-or-bust choice who has tremendous talent but quit on Michigan State. ... For the first time, Richard Sherman let his emotions negatively impact his play, so there was trade talk in the spring. A bunch of candidates will compete for the opposite corner spot. ... They are clearly the class of the division, but the line must sustain Wilson through the season so he can play his best in the playoffs."

McDowell: Joe Robbins; Sherman: Peter Brouillet

SEAHAWKS IN THE DRAFT

C

RD	PLAYER	POS	HT	WT	COLLEGE
2.	Malik McDowell	DL	6-6	295	Michigan State
2.	Ethan Pocic	OL	6-6	310	LSU
3.	Shaquill Griffin	CB	6-0	194	UCF
3.	Delano Hill	S	6-1	216	Michigan
3.	Nazair Jones	DL	6-5	304	North Carolina
3.	Amara Darboh	WR	6-2	212	Michigan
4.	Tedric Thompson	S	6-0	204	Colorado
6.	Mike Tyson	S	6-1	204	Cincinnati
6.	Justin Senior	OL	6-5	331	Mississippi State
7.	David Moore	WR	6-0	214	East Central (OK)
7.	Christopher Carson	RB	6-0	218	Oklahoma State

Addressing Seattle's most pressing need, Ethan Pocic has the best chance to emerge as a starter first among the 2017 draft picks. While he can play every position on the line, Pocic likely will get his shot at guard. The Seahawks concentrated on defense, spending six of their 11 choices on that side of the ball. Malik McDowell, with his long, explosive frame, should fit into the rotation on the interior of the defensive line. He might have been drafted much higher had it not been for attitude concerns; the Seahawks looked beyond those reports and hope McDowell can provide them with another Michael Bennett-style player. They added four defensive backs, more than at any other position. Shaquill Griffin has the athleticism to help at cornerback, an urgent need, but he lacks deep speed; ironically, he couldn't keep up with Amara Darboh, a fellow Seahawks pick, during the past college season. Delano Hill, a college teammate of Darboh at Michigan, gives Seattle another physical safety against the run.

OUTSIDE THE HUDDLE

SHERMAN'S MARCH Richard Sherman was one of the NFL's biggest offseason stories — and nothing happened. The rumor mill churned nonstop: The Seahawks wanted to trade him. Sherman wanted to be traded. In the end, he stayed put. It appears the team wanted to reel in the mercurial personality, who was a distraction after squabbling with coaches, teammates and media. "I think he'd admit he had a tough year," general manager John Schneider says.

WEIGHT GAIN Newly acquired running back Eddie Lacy has a $385,000 weight clause in his contract, one that will pay him $55,000 each time he hits seven mandated weigh-in targets. He packed 267 pounds at his free-agent signing with Seattle. Coach Pete Carroll wants him big, but not that big. "Into his 240s, he's really dangerous," Carroll says.

CRY WOLF Tight end Luke Willson showed his creative side when he re-signed with the Seahawks. He tweeted a clip from the film "Wolf of Wall Street" in which actor Leo DiCaprio declares rather vividly, "I'm not leaving! They're going to need a (bleeping) wrecking ball to throw me out of here!"

IRON MAN Russell Wilson has started every game of his five-year NFL career. He's 92-for-92, which includes a dozen playoff games. The streak almost ended midway through the 2016 season. The Seahawks suggested he take a game off after a second knee injury, but he wouldn't have it. "There was no chance I wasn't playing," Wilson says.

TODAY'S SPECIAL During the offseason, Seahawks defensive end Frank Clark went out for Korean barbecue in Los Angeles and ended up in a medical facility. The food wasn't responsible. He tweeted out a photo of his scar-riddled torso after having an emergency appendectomy. He was smiling while showing off the damage.

WING MAN Returning to Seattle, tight end Jimmy Graham caught a cross-country flight that didn't show up on any airport reader board. A certified pilot, he flew from Miami to the Northwest in his 1957 Army Beaver. Graham needed three-and-a-half days to cross 13 states and visit nine airports, and he flew for nearly 28 hours.

SHANKS A LOT New placekicker Blair Walsh missed a last-second, chip-shot field goal against the Seahawks, making them a 10–9 playoff winner in 2015. Now he's one of them. His career has been shaky since the shank, something the team addressed before signing him. "It was a discussion, yeah," Schneider says. "I'd be lying if I told you it wasn't."

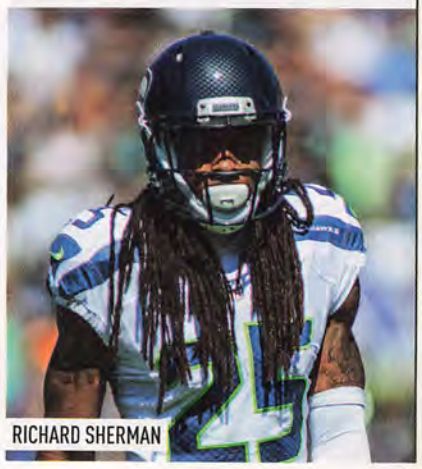
SAFETY FIRST The Seahawks added safety Bradley McDougald, a two-year starter for Tampa Bay, in free agency. Unfortunately for him, he joins a team with a pair of Pro Bowl safeties ahead of him. Yet McDougald remains confident he'll play. Seattle has suggested it might use three safeties more often than not. The Seahawks "made it clear that talent gets on the field," he says.

NUMBERS TO KNOW

29.5 Seattle's offense finished dead last in pressure rate, allowing their quarterback to be hurried on 29.5 percent of passing snaps.

18.4 Seattle's offense went three-and-out 18.4 percent of the time, the fifth-highest rate in the league.

3.19 Opponents averaged a league-low 3.19 adjusted line yards running up the middle against the Seahawks.

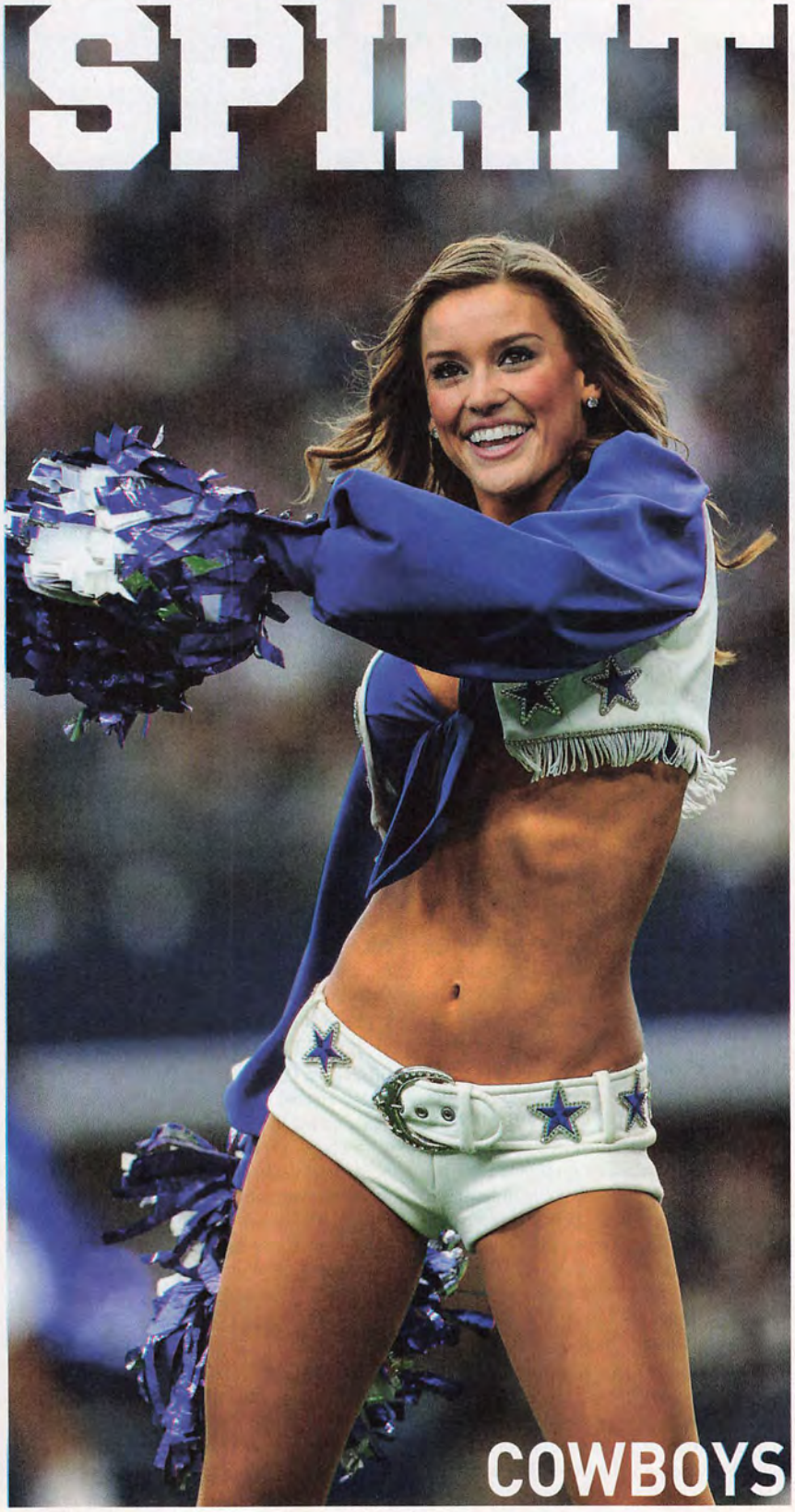


RICHARD SHERMAN

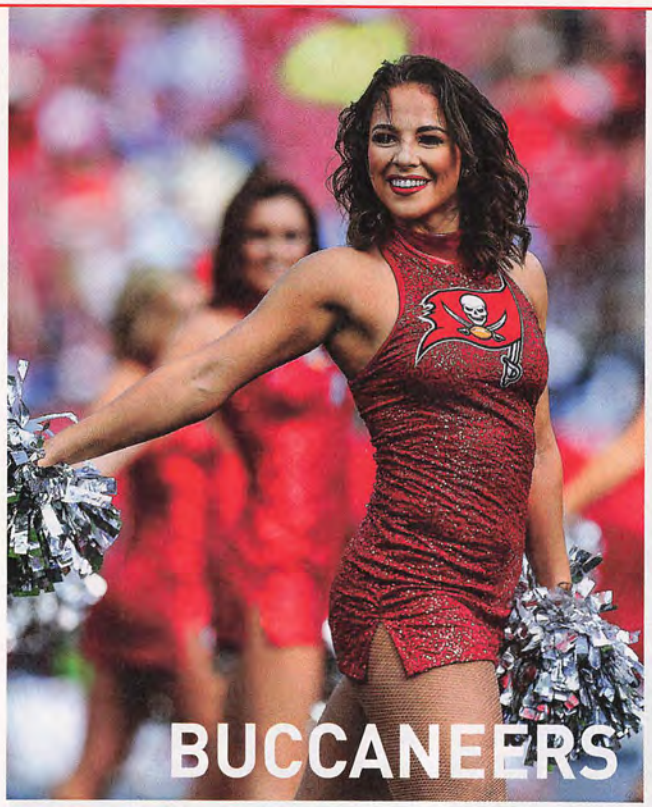
SIDELINE SPIRIT

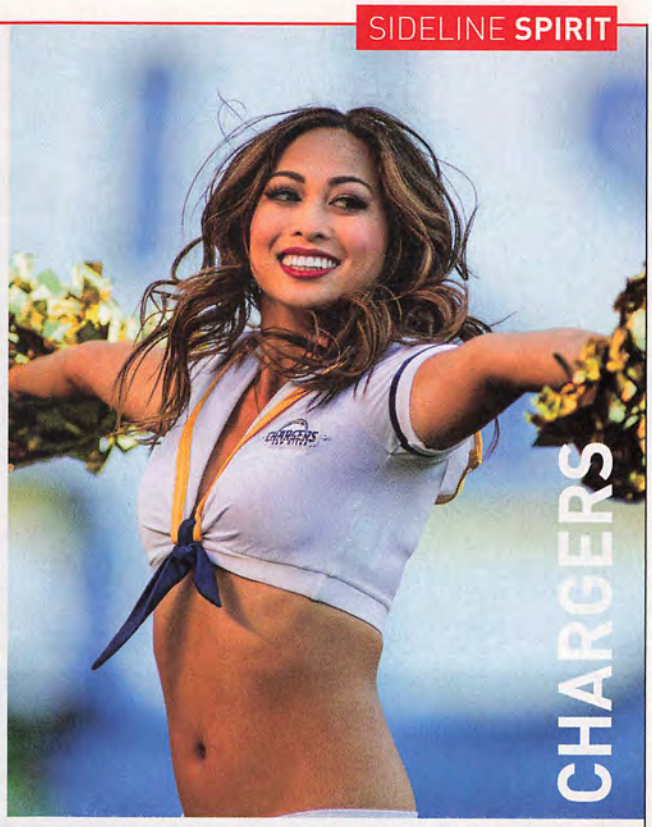
JAGUARS

SAINTS

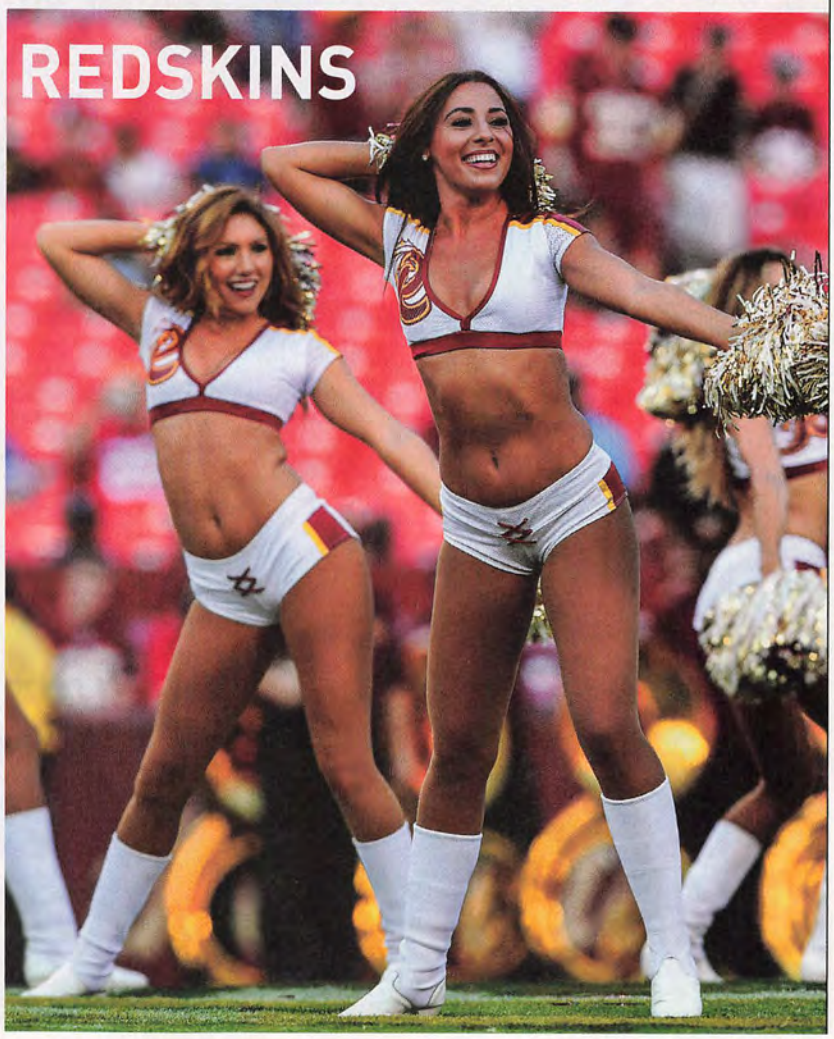

COWBOYS

Jaguars: David Rosenblum/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images; Cowboys: Layne Murdoch; Saints: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Buccaneers: Don Juan Moore/Getty Images; Chargers: Peter Brouillet; Titans: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Redskins: Larry French/Getty Images


BUCCANEERS


CHARGERS

TITANS


REDSKINS

FALCONS

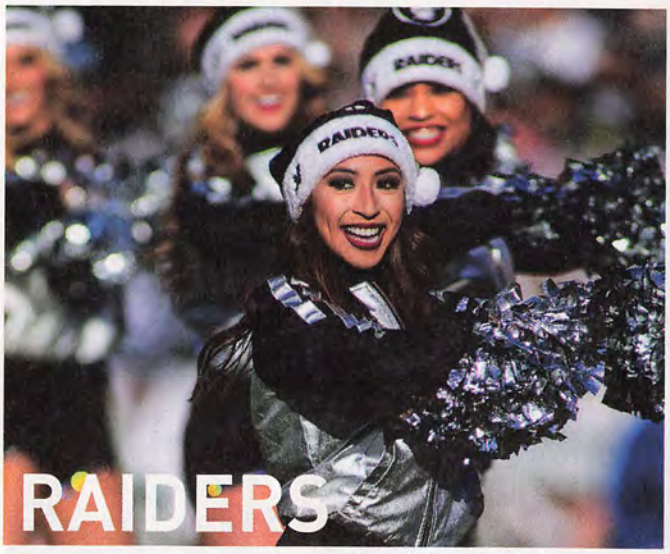
PATRIOTS

TEXANS

LIONS

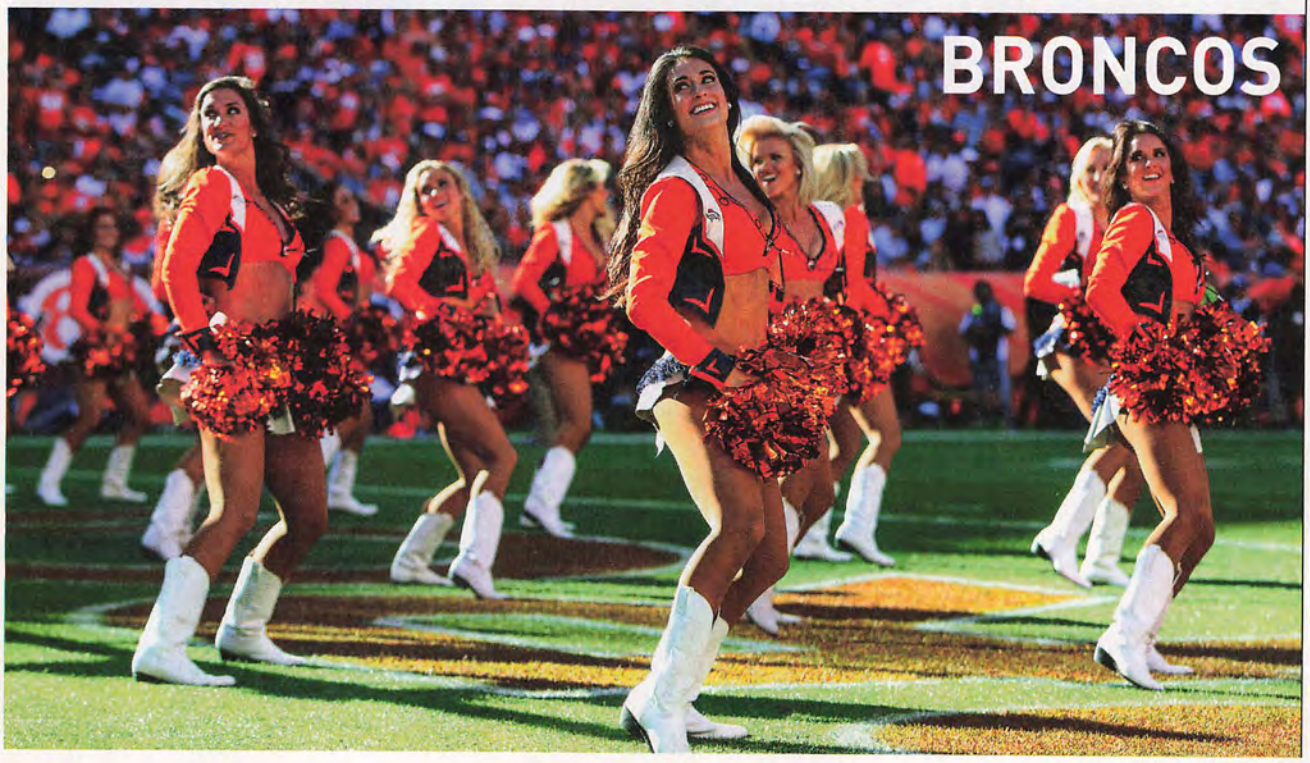
Falcons: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports; Patriots: Ronald Martinez/Getty Images; Texans: Bob Levey/Getty Images; Lions: Gregory Shamus/Getty Images; Ravens: Daniel Kucin Jr./Icon Sportswire via Getty Images; Raiders: Peter Brouillet; Bengals: John Grieshop/Getty Images; Broncos: Tim Umphrey

RAVENS



RAIDERS

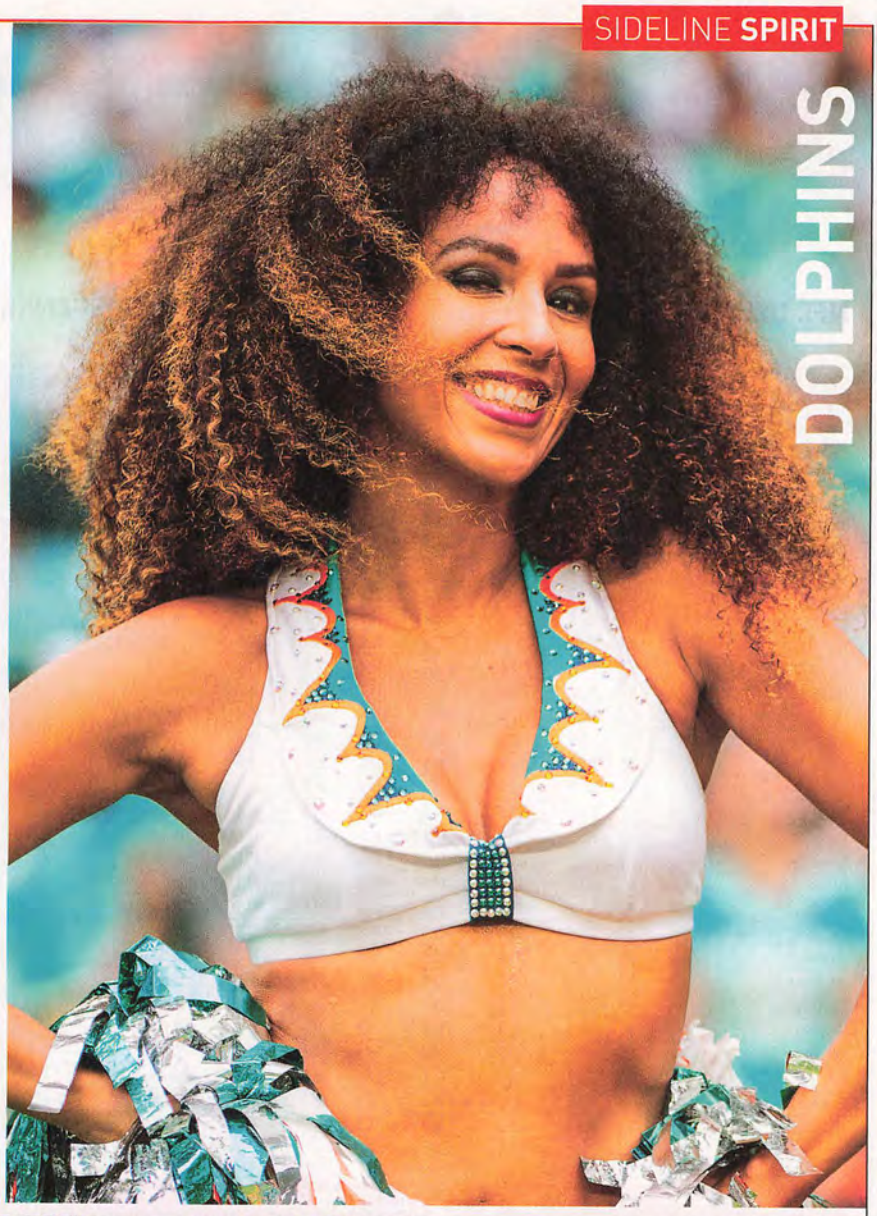
BENGALS



BRONCOS

Eagles: Rich Schultz/Getty Images; Cardinals: Ralph Freso/Getty Images; Jets: Gary Hershorn; Chiefs: Tim Umphrey; Panthers: Michael Berg/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images; Colts:Andy Lyons/Getty Images; Dolphins: Doug Murray/Icon Sportswire via Getty Images; Seahawks: Tom Pennington/Getty Images; Rams: Peter Brouillet

COLTS


DOLPHINS

SEAHAWKS

RAMS

2016 NFL STATISTICS

NFL OFFENSE

	PPG	YPP	YPG	PASS-YPG	RUSH-YPG	FD/G	3RD%	4TH%
Atlanta	33.8	6.7	386.8	275.1	111.6	22.1	41.3	57.1
New Orleans	29.3	6.2	396.4	295.8	100.6	23.1	49.0	83.3
New England	27.6	5.9	361.5	252.0	109.5	20.6	45.1	66.7
Green Bay	27.0	5.7	340.8	244.0	96.8	20.1	46.2	41.2
Dallas	26.3	6.0	364.5	219.1	145.4	21.4	42.4	88.9
Arizona	26.1	5.4	345.3	242.3	103.0	21.7	41.5	50.0
Oakland	26.0	5.7	359.5	242.9	116.6	20.2	39.1	50.0
Indianapolis	25.7	5.6	340.4	244.5	95.9	20.4	44.3	41.2
San Diego	25.6	5.6	331.9	245.6	86.3	19.6	43.2	40.0
Pittsburgh	24.9	5.8	353.1	247.4	105.7	19.8	42.6	50.0
Buffalo	24.9	5.6	339.8	179.6	160.1	19.6	41.2	57.1
Washington	24.8	6.4	385.6	282.0	103.6	20.6	46.0	50.0
Kansas City	24.3	5.5	320.2	217.4	102.8	17.4	36.3	71.4
Tennessee	23.8	5.7	343.3	213.0	130.3	19.1	45.1	36.4
Carolina	23.1	5.2	322.8	217.4	105.4	18.8	38.0	60.0
Philadelphia	22.9	5.0	315.8	209.6	106.2	19.3	37.6	50.0
Miami	22.7	5.8	315.3	205.9	109.3	16.4	35.2	0.0
Seattle	22.1	5.6	333.7	239.7	94.0	18.4	39.0	40.0
Tampa Bay	22.1	5.2	327.6	233.6	94.0	20.1	44.6	44.4
Detroit	21.6	5.5	313.3	236.2	77.1	19.1	42.6	70.0
Baltimore	21.4	5.2	326.8	239.8	86.9	18.4	35.9	43.8
Denver	20.8	5.1	301.3	217.4	83.8	17.0	34.3	57.1
Minnesota	20.4	5.0	291.7	224.1	67.6	17.6	37.3	47.1
Cincinnati	20.3	5.4	333.8	232.8	101.0	19.8	40.1	77.8
Jacksonville	19.9	5.1	305.6	215.0	90.6	18.6	35.6	43.8
N.Y. Giants	19.4	5.2	309.9	231.8	78.2	17.0	35.6	50.0
San Francisco	19.3	4.9	292.3	170.0	122.3	17.1	36.0	50.0
Houston	17.4	4.7	296.6	183.3	113.3	17.8	38.5	29.4
Chicago	17.4	5.9	336.3	239.3	97.0	19.1	38.6	25.0
N.Y. Jets	17.2	5.3	308.7	204.0	104.7	17.1	36.5	47.1
Cleveland	16.5	5.1	283.7	191.1	92.6	16.8	35.0	72.2
Los Angeles	14.0	4.4	255.0	180.0	75.0	14.8	32.7	38.9

NFL DEFENSE

	PPG	YPP	YPG	PASS-YPG	RUSH-YPG	INT	SACK	3RD%
New England	15.6	5.2	308.9	225.1	83.9	13	34	38.9
N.Y. Giants	17.8	5.1	321.9	235.8	86.2	17	35	35.3
Seattle	18.3	5.0	302.9	213.8	89.1	11	42	38.7
Denver	18.6	4.7	302.3	175.5	126.8	14	42	36.4
Dallas	19.1	5.5	322.3	245.9	76.4	9	36	39.1
Minnesota	19.2	5.1	294.7	199.2	95.5	14	41	38.8
Kansas City	19.4	5.5	343.6	230.6	113.1	18	28	43.2
Cincinnati	19.7	5.4	329.8	221.1	108.8	17	33	39.6
Baltimore	20.1	5.0	298.9	219.1	79.8	18	31	35.0
Pittsburgh	20.4	5.5	315.3	229.8	85.6	13	38	41.1
Houston	20.5	5.1	286.6	193.3	93.3	11	31	38.5
Philadelphia	20.7	5.6	330.6	231.6	98.9	16	34	40.0
Detroit	22.4	5.0	326.8	230.0	96.8	10	26	45.5
Arizona	22.6	4.8	297.5	205.9	91.6	14	48	38.8
Tampa Bay	23.1	5.8	347.0	237.8	109.2	17	38	34.4
Buffalo	23.6	5.6	336.4	211.3	125.2	12	39	40.0
Tennessee	23.6	5.5	339.4	254.0	85.4	12	40	36.7
Miami	23.8	5.6	357.9	224.9	132.9	16	33	36.2
Washington	23.9	5.8	357.1	247.4	109.7	13	38	46.6
Oakland	24.1	6.1	353.3	244.6	108.6	16	25	39.4
Green Bay	24.3	5.9	338.4	248.5	89.9	17	40	41.2
Indianapolis	24.5	6.0	353.5	244.5	109.0	8	33	41.5
Los Angeles	24.6	5.2	315.5	217.0	98.5	10	31	37.3
Chicago	24.9	5.5	323.4	209.3	114.1	8	37	40.5
Jacksonville	25.0	5.0	297.7	197.1	100.6	7	33	37.1
Carolina	25.1	5.6	341.0	256.4	84.6	17	47	37.9
Atlanta	25.4	5.6	341.6	245.4	96.3	12	34	41.8
N.Y. Jets	25.6	5.5	328.1	233.5	94.6	8	27	40.0
San Diego	26.4	5.4	324.3	232.8	91.5	18	35	39.9
Cleveland	28.3	5.9	372.9	234.6	138.4	10	26	45.1
New Orleans	28.4	6.0	346.3	253.6	92.8	9	30	43.3
San Francisco	30.0	5.9	382.9	222.4	160.4	10	33	45.1

2016 NFL STANDINGS

NFC

East	W-L	Home	Road	Div.	PF	PA
Dallas	13-3	7-1	6-2	3-3	421	306
N.Y. Giants	11-5	7-1	4-4	4-2	310	284
Washington	8-7-1	4-4	4-3-1	3-3	396	383
Philadelphia	7-9	6-2	1-7	2-4	367	331

North	W-L	Home	Road	Div.	PF	PA
Green Bay	10-6	6-2	4-4	5-1	432	388
Detroit	9-7	6-2	3-5	3-3	346	358
Minnesota	8-8	5-3	3-5	2-4	327	307
Chicago	3-13	3-5	0-8	2-4	279	399

South	W-L	Home	Road	Div.	PF	PA
Atlanta	11-5	5-3	6-2	5-1	540	406
Tampa Bay	9-7	4-4	5-3	4-2	354	369
New Orleans	7-9	4-4	3-5	2-4	469	454
Carolina	6-10	4-4	2-6	1-5	369	402

West	W-L	Home	Road	Div.	PF	PA
Seattle	10-5-1	7-1	3-4-1	3-2-1	354	292
Arizona	7-8-1	4-3-1	3-5	4-1-1	418	362
Los Angeles	4-12	1-7	3-5	2-4	224	394
San Francisco	2-14	1-7	1-7	2-4	309	480

AFC

East	W-L	Home	Road	Div.	PF	PA
New England	14-2	6-2	8-0	5-1	441	250
Miami	10-6	6-2	4-4	4-2	363	380
Buffalo	7-9	4-4	3-5	1-5	399	378
N.Y. Jets	5-11	2-6	3-5	2-4	275	409

North	W-L	Home	Road	Div.	PF	PA
Pittsburgh	11-5	6-2	5-3	5-1	399	327
Baltimore	8-8	6-2	2-6	4-2	343	321
Cincinnati	6-9-1	4-3-1	2-6	3-3	325	315
Cleveland	1-15	1-7	0-8	0-6	264	452

South	W-L	Home	Road	Div.	PF	PA
Houston	9-7	7-1	2-6	5-1	279	328
Tennessee	9-7	5-3	4-4	2-4	381	378
Indianapolis	8-8	4-4	4-4	3-3	411	392
Jacksonville	3-13	2-6	1-7	2-4	318	400

West	W-L	Home	Road	Div.	PF	PA
Kansas City	12-4	6-2	6-2	6-0	389	311
Oakland	12-4	6-2	6-2	3-3	416	385
Denver	9-7	5-3	4-4	2-4	333	297
San Diego	5-11	3-5	2-6	1-5	410	423

2016 POSTSEASON

AFC Wild Card Playoff Games
HOUSTON 27, OAKLAND 14
PITTSBURGH 30, MIAMI 12

NFC Wild Card Playoff Games
SEATTLE 26, DETROIT 6
GREEN BAY 38, N.Y. GIANTS 13

AFC Divisional Playoff Games
NEW ENGLAND 34, HOUSTON 16
PITTSBURGH 18, KANSAS CITY 16

NFC Divisional Playoff Games
ATLANTA 36, SEATTLE 20
GREEN BAY 34, DALLAS 31

AFC Championship Game
NEW ENGLAND 36, PITTSBURGH 17

NFC Championship Game
ATLANTA 44, GREEN BAY 21

Super Bowl LI
NEW ENGLAND 34, ATLANTA 28 (OT)

Peter Brouillet

DREW BREES

NFL PASSING LEADERS

PLAYER	TEAM	YDS	YPG	YPA	PCT	TD	INT	QB-RATE	SACK
Drew Brees	NO	5,208	325.5	7.7	70.0	37	15	101.7	27
Matt Ryan	ATL	4,944	309.0	9.3	69.9	38	7	117.1	37
Kirk Cousins	WSH	4,917	307.3	8.1	67.0	25	12	97.2	23
Aaron Rodgers	GB	4,428	276.8	7.3	65.7	40	7	104.2	35
Philip Rivers	SD	4,386	274.1	7.6	60.4	33	21	87.9	36
Matthew Stafford	DET	4,327	270.4	7.3	65.3	24	10	93.3	37
Joe Flacco	BAL	4,317	269.8	6.4	64.9	20	15	83.5	33
Andrew Luck	IND	4,240	282.7	7.8	63.5	31	13	96.4	41
Carson Palmer	ARI	4,233	282.2	7.1	61.0	26	14	87.2	40
Russell Wilson	SEA	4,219	263.7	7.7	64.7	21	11	92.6	41
Andy Dalton	CIN	4,206	262.9	7.5	64.7	18	8	91.8	41
Jameis Winston	TB	4,090	255.6	7.2	60.8	28	18	86.1	35
Eli Manning	NYG	4,027	251.7	6.7	63.0	26	16	86.0	21
Derek Carr	OAK	3,937	262.5	7.0	63.8	28	6	96.7	16
Blake Bortles	JAX	3,905	244.1	6.2	58.9	23	16	78.8	34
Sam Bradford	MIN	3,877	258.5	7.0	71.6	20	5	99.3	37
Ben Roethlisberger	PIT	3,819	272.8	7.5	64.4	29	13	95.4	17
Carson Wentz	PHI	3,782	236.4	6.2	62.4	16	14	79.3	33
Dak Prescott	DAL	3,667	229.2	8.0	67.8	23	4	104.9	25
Tom Brady	NE	3,554	296.2	8.2	67.4	28	2	112.2	15
Cam Newton	CAR	3,509	233.9	6.9	52.9	19	14	75.8	36
Alex Smith	KC	3,502	233.5	7.2	67.1	15	8	91.2	28
Marcus Mariota	TEN	3,426	228.4	7.6	61.2	26	9	95.6	23
Trevor Siemian	DEN	3,401	242.9	7.0	59.5	18	10	84.6	31
Tyrod Taylor	BUF	3,023	201.5	6.9	61.7	17	6	89.7	42
Ryan Tannehill	MIA	2,995	230.4	7.7	67.1	19	12	93.5	29
Brock Osweiler	HOU	2,957	197.1	5.8	59.0	15	16	72.2	27
Ryan Fitzpatrick	NYJ	2,710	193.6	6.7	56.6	12	17	69.6	19
Colin Kaepernick	SF	2,241	186.8	6.8	59.2	16	4	90.7	36
Case Keenum	LA	2,201	220.1	6.8	60.9	9	11	76.4	23
Matt Barkley	CHI	1,611	230.1	7.5	59.7	8	14	68.3	6
Brian Hoyer	CHI	1,445	240.8	7.2	67.0	6	0	98.0	4
Cody Kessler	CLE	1,380	153.3	7.1	65.6	6	2	92.3	21
Josh McCown	CLE	1,100	220.0	6.7	54.5	6	6	72.3	18
Jared Goff	LA	1,089	155.6	5.3	54.6	5	7	63.6	26
Jay Cutler	CHI	1,059	211.8	7.7	59.1	4	5	78.1	17
Blaine Gabbert	SF	925	154.2	5.8	56.9	5	6	68.4	11
Robert Griffin III	CLE	886	177.2	6.0	59.2	2	3	72.5	22
Bryce Petty	NYJ	809	134.8	6.1	56.4	3	7	60.0	13
Matt Moore	MIA	721	180.3	8.3	63.2	8	3	105.6	1
Landry Jones	PIT	558	69.8	6.5	61.6	4	2	86.3	4
Jimmy Garoppolo	NE	502	83.7	8.0	68.3	4	0	113.3	3
Paxton Lynch	DEN	497	165.7	6.0	59.0	2	1	79.2	9
Tom Savage	HOU	461	153.7	6.3	63.0	0	0	80.9	5
Derek Anderson	CAR	453	90.6	8.5	67.9	2	5	67.6	0
Nick Foles	KC	410	136.7	7.5	65.5	3	0	105.9	4
Jacoby Brissett	NE	400	133.3	7.3	61.8	0	0	83.9	6
Matt Cassel	TEN	284	71.0	5.6	58.8	2	2	71.0	5
Shaun Hill	MIN	242	80.7	6.9	54.3	0	0	76.1	1
Scott Tolzien	IND	216	72.0	5.8	62.2	1	2	64.7	3
Drew Stanton	ARI	192	38.4	4.0	39.6	2	3	39.6	1

NFL SACK LEADERS

PLAYER	TEAM	SACK
Vic Beasley Jr.	ATL	15.5
Von Miller	DEN	13.5
Lorenzo Alexander	BUF	12.5
Markus Golden	ARI	12.5
Danielle Hunter	MIN	12.5
Cliff Avril	SEA	11.5
Cameron Wake	MIA	11.5
Erik Walden	IND	11.0
Ryan Kerrigan	WSH	11.0
Chandler Jones	ARI	11.0
Nick Perry	GB	11.0
Khalil Mack	OAK	11.0
Brian Orakpo	TEN	10.5
Joey Bosa	SD	10.5
Dee Ford	KC	10.0
Frank Clark	SEA	10.0
Mario Addison	CAR	9.5
Derrick Morgan	TEN	9.0
Geno Atkins	CIN	9.0
Trent Murphy	WSH	9.0
Olivier Vernon	NYG	8.5
Terrell Suggs	BAL	8.0
Calais Campbell	ARI	8.0
Carlos Dunlap	CIN	8.0
Everson Griffen	MIN	8.0
Melvin Ingram	SD	8.0
Aaron Donald	LA	8.0
Kerry Hyder	DET	8.0
Shane Ray	DEN	8.0
Yannick Ngakoue	JAX	8.0
Julius Peppers	GB	7.5
Brian Robison	MIN	7.5
Willie Young	CHI	7.5
Cameron Jordan	NO	7.5
Whitney Mercilus	HOU	7.5
Gerald McCoy	TB	7.0
Jason Pierre-Paul	NYG	7.0
Bruce Irvin	OAK	7.0
Akiem Hicks	CHI	7.0
Trey Flowers	NE	7.0
Leonard Williams	NYJ	7.0
Leonard Floyd	CHI	7.0

PLAYER	TEAM	SACK
Robert Ayers	TB	6.5
Nick Fairley	NO	6.5
Fletcher Cox	PHI	6.5
Malik Jackson	JAX	6.5
Ahmad Brooks	SF	6.0
Jerry Hughes	BUF	6.0
Kawann Short	CAR	6.0
Benson Mayowa	DAL	6.0
Jadeveon Clowney	HOU	6.0
DeForest Buckner	SF	6.0
Brandon Graham	PHI	5.5
Andre Branch	MIA	5.5
Derek Wolfe	DEN	5.5
Noah Spence	TB	5.5
Emmanuel Ogbah	CLE	5.5
James Harrison	PIT	5.0
Robert Mathis	IND	5.0
Kyle Williams	BUF	5.0
William Hayes	LA	5.0
Clay Matthews	GB	5.0
Connor Barwin	PHI	5.0
Michael Bennett	SEA	5.0
Ndamukong Suh	MIA	5.0
Jabaal Sheard	NE	5.0
Jurrell Casey	TEN	5.0
Lavonte David	TB	5.0
Kony Ealy	CAR	5.0
Timmy Jernigan	BAL	5.0
Benardrick McKinney	HOU	5.0
Maliek Collins	DAL	5.0
Adrian Clayborn	ATL	4.5
Muhammad Wilkerson	NYJ	4.5
Bobby Wagner	SEA	4.5
Tyrone Crawford	DAL	4.5
Devin Taylor	DET	4.5
Bud Dupree	PIT	4.5
Preston Smith	WSH	4.5
DeMarcus Ware	DEN	4.0

NFL INT LEADERS

PLAYER	TEAM	INT
Casey Hayward	SD	7
Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie	NYG	6
Quintin Demps	HOU	6
Marcus Peters	KC	6
Reggie Nelson	OAK	5
Stephon Gilmore	BUF	5
Xavier Rhodes	MIN	5
Ha Ha Clinton-Dix	GB	5
Jordan Hicks	PHI	5
Landon Collins	NYG	5
Eric Weddle	BAL	4
Brent Grimes	TB	4
Eric Berry	KC	4
Kurt Coleman	CAR	4
Richard Sherman	SEA	4
Keith Tandy	TB	4
Marcus Cooper	ARI	4
C.J. Mosley	BAL	4
Malcolm Butler	NE	4
Tony Lippett	MIA	4
Thomas Davis	CAR	3
Aqib Talib	DEN	3
Darius Butler	IND	3

PLAYER	TEAM	INT
Malcolm Jenkins	PHI	3
Joe Haden	CLE	3
Perrish Cox	TEN	3
Darian Stewart	DEN	3
Patrick Peterson	ARI	3
Dre Kirkpatrick	CIN	3
Janoris Jenkins	NYG	3
George Iloka	CIN	3
Josh Norman	WSH	3
Rodney McLeod	PHI	3
D.J. Swearinger	ARI	3
Jamar Taylor, DB	CLE	3
Shawn Williams	CIN	3
Micah Hyde, DB	GB	3
Ryan Shazier	PIT	3
Bashaud Breeland	WSH	3
Daniel Sorensen	KC	3
Zachary Orr	BAL	3
Trae Waynes	MIN	3
Briean Boddy-Calhoun	CLE	3
Deion Jones	ATL	3
Damarious Randall	GB	3
Artie Burns	PIT	3

NFL RUSHING LEADERS

PLAYER	TEAM	YDS	YPG	ATT	YPA	TD	20+	LONG
Ezekiel Elliott	DAL	1,631	108.7	322	5.1	15	14	60
Jordan Howard	CHI	1,313	87.5	252	5.2	6	10	69
DeMarco Murray	TEN	1,287	80.4	293	4.4	9	4	75
Jay Ajayi	MIA	1,272	84.8	260	4.9	8	10	62
Le'Veon Bell	PIT	1,268	105.7	261	4.9	7	4	44
LeSean McCoy	BUF	1,267	84.5	234	5.4	13	11	75
David Johnson	ARI	1,239	77.4	293	4.2	16	6	58
LeGarrette Blount	NE	1,161	72.6	299	3.9	18	7	44
Devonta Freeman	ATL	1,079	67.4	227	4.8	11	7	75
Lamar Miller	HOU	1,073	76.6	268	4.0	5	7	45
Mark Ingram	NO	1,043	65.2	205	5.1	6	4	75
Frank Gore	IND	1,025	64.1	263	3.9	4	1	22
Melvin Gordon	SD	997	76.7	254	3.9	10	7	48
Carlos Hyde	SF	988	76.0	217	4.6	6	7	47
Isaiah Crowell	CLE	952	59.5	198	4.8	7	8	85
Spencer Ware	KC	921	65.8	214	4.3	3	3	46
Todd Gurley	LA	885	55.3	278	3.2	6	2	24
Jeremy Hill	CIN	839	55.9	222	3.8	9	5	74
Jonathan Stewart	CAR	824	63.4	218	3.8	9	6	47
Matt Forté	NYJ	813	58.1	218	3.7	7	5	32
Latavius Murray	OAK	788	56.3	195	4.0	12	5	42
Terrance West	BAL	774	48.4	193	4.0	5	5	41
Bilal Powell	NYJ	722	45.1	131	5.5	3	4	35
Robert Kelley	WSH	704	46.9	168	4.2	6	4	66
Ryan Mathews	PHI	661	50.8	155	4.3	8	6	30
Devontae Booker	DEN	612	38.3	174	3.5	4	0	18
Rashad Jennings	NYG	593	45.6	181	3.3	3	3	25
Tyrod Taylor	BUF	580	38.7	95	6.1	6	7	49
Mike Gillislee	BUF	577	38.5	101	5.7	8	7	44
Jacquizz Rodgers	TB	560	56.0	129	4.3	2	3	45
Tim Hightower	NO	548	34.3	133	4.1	4	4	30
Jerick McKinnon	MIN	539	35.9	159	3.4	2	2	36
Tevin Coleman	ATL	520	40.0	118	4.4	8	5	55
Jalen Richard	OAK	491	30.7	83	5.9	1	5	75

EZEKIEL ELLIOTT

NFL RECEIVING LEADERS

PLAYER	TEAM	REC	YDS	YPC	YPG	LONG	TD	20+
T.Y. Hilton	IND	91	1,448	15.9	90.5	63	6	28
Julio Jones	ATL	83	1,409	17.0	100.6	75	6	27
Odell Beckham Jr.	NYG	101	1,367	13.5	85.4	75	10	20
Mike Evans	TB	96	1,321	13.8	82.6	45	12	15
Antonio Brown	PIT	106	1,284	12.1	85.6	51	12	22
Jordy Nelson	GB	97	1,257	13.0	78.6	60	14	19
Brandin Cooks	NO	78	1,173	15.0	73.3	98	8	15
Amari Cooper	OAK	83	1,153	13.9	72.1	64	5	21
Michael Thomas	NO	92	1,137	12.4	75.8	46	9	18
Jarvis Landry	MIA	94	1,136	12.1	71.0	71	4	16
Doug Baldwin	SEA	94	1,128	12.0	70.5	59	7	16
Travis Kelce	KC	85	1,125	13.2	70.3	80	4	14
Julian Edelman	NE	98	1,106	11.3	69.1	77	3	11
Demaryius Thomas	DEN	90	1,083	12.0	67.7	55	5	10
Golden Tate	DET	91	1,077	11.8	67.3	67	4	13
Greg Olsen	CAR	80	1,073	13.4	67.1	78	3	14
Tyrell Williams	SD	69	1,059	15.3	66.2	51	7	19
Pierre Garçon	WSH	79	1,041	13.2	65.1	70	3	15
Emmanuel Sanders	DEN	79	1,032	13.1	64.5	64	5	12
Larry Fitzgerald	ARI	107	1,023	9.6	63.9	32	6	8
Mike Wallace	BAL	72	1,017	14.1	63.6	95	4	10
Terrelle Pryor Sr.	CLE	77	1,007	13.1	62.9	54	4	11
DeSean Jackson	WSH	56	1,005	17.9	67.0	80	4	19
Michael Crabtree	OAK	89	1,003	11.3	62.7	56	8	10
Kenny Britt	LA	68	1,002	14.7	66.8	66	5	15
Davante Adams	GB	75	997	13.3	62.3	66	12	17
Adam Thielen	MIN	69	967	14.0	60.4	71	5	16
A.J. Green	CIN	66	964	14.6	96.4	54	4	15
DeAndre Hopkins	HOU	78	954	12.2	59.6	51	4	10
Rishard Matthews	TEN	65	945	14.5	59.1	60	9	16
Kelvin Benjamin	CAR	63	941	14.9	58.8	50	7	10
Marvin Jones	DET	55	930	16.9	62.0	73	4	16
Jimmy Graham	SEA	65	923	14.2	57.7	42	6	10
Stefon Diggs	MIN	84	903	10.8	69.5	46	3	10
Willie Snead	NO	72	895	12.4	59.7	49	4	12
Cameron Meredith	CHI	66	888	13.5	63.4	50	4	13
Allen Robinson	JAX	73	883	12.1	55.2	42	6	11
David Johnson	ARI	80	879	11.0	54.9	58	4	13
Brandon LaFell	CIN	64	862	13.5	53.9	86	6	11

PLAYER	TEAM	REC	YDS	YPC	YPG	LONG	TD	20+
Quincy Enunwa	NYJ	58	857	14.8	53.6	69	4	14
Marqise Lee	JAX	63	851	13.5	53.2	51	3	13
Jamison Crowder	WSH	67	847	12.6	52.9	55	7	11
Kyle Rudolph	MIN	83	840	10.1	52.5	44	7	11
Cole Beasley	DAL	75	833	11.1	52.1	47	5	6
Alshon Jeffery	CHI	52	821	15.8	68.4	54	2	12
Zach Ertz	PHI	78	816	10.5	58.3	30	4	9
Dontrelle Inman	SD	58	810	14.0	50.6	57	4	10
Jordan Matthews	PHI	73	804	11.0	57.4	54	3	13
Delanie Walker	TEN	65	800	12.3	53.3	47	7	13
Steve Smith Sr.	BAL	70	799	11.4	57.1	52	5	12
Dez Bryant	DAL	50	796	15.9	61.2	56	8	10
Brandon Marshall	NYJ	59	788	13.4	52.5	41	3	10
Ted Ginn Jr.	CAR	54	752	13.9	47.0	88	4	9
DeVante Parker	MIA	56	744	13.3	49.6	56	4	9
Dennis Pitta	BAL	86	729	8.5	45.6	30	2	4
Kenny Stills	MIA	42	726	17.3	45.4	74	9	10
Eric Ebron	DET	61	711	11.7	54.7	61	1	9
Martellus Bennett	NE	55	701	12.7	43.8	58	7	10
Jordan Reed	WSH	66	686	10.4	57.2	33	6	9
Sterling Shepard	NYG	65	683	10.5	42.7	32	8	6
Chris Hogan	NE	38	680	17.9	45.3	79	4	11
Travis Benjamin	SD	47	677	14.4	48.4	54	4	10
Jason Witten	DAL	69	673	9.8	42.1	35	3	7
Jeremy Kerley	SF	64	667	10.4	41.7	33	3	8
Cameron Brate	TB	57	660	11.6	44.0	38	8	5
Mohamed Sanu	ATL	59	653	11.1	43.5	59	4	6
Will Fuller V	HOU	47	635	13.5	45.4	53	2	11
Coby Fleener	NO	50	631	12.6	39.4	50	3	12
Adam Humphries	TB	55	622	11.3	41.5	42	2	7
Le'Veon Bell	PIT	75	616	8.2	51.3	32	2	4
Robert Woods	BUF	51	613	12.0	47.2	34	1	10
Gary Barnidge	CLE	55	612	11.1	38.3	43	2	7
Randall Cobb	GB	60	610	10.2	46.9	47	4	7
Tyler Boyd	CIN	54	603	11.2	37.7	30	1	9
Tyler Lockett	SEA	41	597	14.6	39.8	57	1	9
Terrance Williams	DAL	44	594	13.5	37.1	47	4	6
Eli Rogers	PIT	48	594	12.4	45.7	39	3	11
Tyreek Hill	KC	61	593	9.7	37.1	49	6	8

Elliott: Layne Murdoch; Hilton: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

NFL RUSHING LEADERS, CONT'D

PLAYER	TEAM	YDS	YPG	ATT	YPA	TD	20+	LONG
Derrick Henry	TEN	490	32.7	110	4.5	5	1	22
Christine Michael	GB/SEA	469	52.1	117	4.0	6	2	41
Colin Kaepernick	SF	468	39.0	69	6.8	2	3	30
DeAndre Washington	OAK	467	33.4	87	5.4	2	7	30
T.J. Yeldon	JAX	465	31.0	130	3.6	1	0	16
Matt Jones	WSH	460	65.7	99	4.6	3	3	57
Ty Montgomery	GB	457	30.5	77	5.9	3	5	61
Paul Perkins	NYG	456	32.6	112	4.1	0	2	22
Chris Ivory	JAX	439	39.9	117	3.8	3	2	42
Darren Sproles	PHI	438	29.2	94	4.7	2	1	25
C.J. Anderson	DEN	437	62.4	110	4.0	4	1	28
Doug Martin	TB	421	52.6	144	2.9	3	0	17
Alfred Blue	HOU	420	30.0	100	4.2	1	2	25
Matt Asiata	MIN	402	25.1	121	3.3	6	2	29
Kenneth Dixon	BAL	382	31.8	88	4.3	2	1	20
Aaron Rodgers	GB	369	23.1	67	5.5	4	3	23
Eddie Lacy	GB	360	72.0	71	5.1	0	4	31
Cam Newton	CAR	359	23.9	90	4.0	5	2	28
Blake Bortles	JAX	359	22.4	58	6.2	3	4	27
Duke Johnson Jr.	CLE	358	22.4	73	4.9	1	2	22
Theo Riddick	DET	357	35.7	92	3.9	1	2	42
Chris Thompson	WSH	356	22.3	68	5.2	3	2	25
Thomas Rawls	SEA	349	38.8	109	3.2	3	1	45
Marcus Mariota	TEN	349	23.3	60	5.8	2	3	41
Rex Burkhead	CIN	344	21.5	74	4.6	2	0	17
DeAngelo Williams	PIT	343	38.1	98	3.5	4	0	17
Andrew Luck	IND	341	22.7	64	5.3	2	3	33
Giovani Bernard	CIN	337	33.7	91	3.7	2	0	17
Zach Zenner	DET	334	23.9	88	3.8	4	1	20
Wendell Smallwood	PHI	312	24.0	77	4.1	1	0	19
Charcandrick West	KC	293	19.5	88	3.3	1	2	28
Dion Lewis	NE	283	40.4	64	4.4	0	0	15
Dak Prescott	DAL	282	17.6	57	4.9	6	0	18

PLAYER	TEAM	YDS	YPG	ATT	YPA	TD	20+	LONG
Tyreek Hill	KC	267	16.7	24	11.1	3	4	70
Fozzy Whittaker	CAR	265	16.6	57	4.6	0	1	25
Dwayne Washington	DET	265	22.1	90	2.9	1	1	28
Russell Wilson	SEA	259	16.2	72	3.6	1	0	18
Alfred Morris	DAL	243	17.4	69	3.5	2	0	17
Peyton Barber	TB	223	14.9	55	4.1	1	1	44
Matthew Stafford	DET	207	12.9	37	5.6	2	1	24
Jeremy Langford	CHI	200	16.7	62	3.2	4	1	23
Shaun Draughn	SF	196	12.3	74	2.6	4	0	18
Kenneth Farrow	SD	192	14.8	60	3.2	0	0	11
Robert Griffin III	CLE	190	38.0	31	6.1	2	1	20
Andy Dalton	CIN	184	11.5	46	4.0	4	0	15
Kenyan Drake	MIA	179	11.2	33	5.4	2	1	45
Blaine Gabbert	SF	173	28.8	40	4.3	2	1	24
C.J. Prosise	SEA	172	28.7	30	5.7	1	1	72
James White	NE	166	10.4	39	4.3	0	0	16
Jameis Winston	TB	165	10.3	53	3.1	1	0	14
Ryan Tannehill	MIA	164	12.6	39	4.2	1	0	18
Robert Turbin	IND	164	10.9	47	3.5	7	0	18
Corey Grant	JAX	164	14.9	32	5.1	1	1	57
Tavon Austin	LA	159	10.6	28	5.7	1	2	30
Shane Vereen	NYG	158	31.6	33	4.8	1	1	25
Kerwynn Williams	ARI	157	15.7	18	8.7	2	3	49
Justin Forsett	DEN/DET/BAL	155	38.8	43	3.6	1	1	64
Terron Ward	ATL	151	30.2	31	4.9	0	2	45
Carson Wentz	PHI	150	9.4	46	3.3	2	0	17
Aaron Ripkowski	GB	150	9.4	34	4.4	2	0	15
Charles Sims	TB	149	21.3	51	2.9	1	1	23
James Starks	GB	145	16.1	63	2.3	0	0	11
Denard Robinson	JAX	144	11.1	41	3.5	0	0	9
Cameron Artis-Payne	CAR	144	48	36	4.0	2	0	14
DuJuan Harris	SF	138	13.8	38	3.6	0	0	19
Alex Smith	KC	134	8.9	48	2.8	5	1	24

NFL RECEIVING LEADERS, CONT'D

PLAYER	TEAM	REC	YDS	YPC	YPG	LONG	TD	20+
Robby Anderson	NYJ	42	587	14.0	36.7	52	2	10
Victor Cruz	NYG	39	586	15.0	39.1	48	1	10
Anquan Boldin	DET	67	584	8.7	36.5	35	8	5
Jack Doyle	IND	59	584	9.9	36.5	24	5	5
Vernon Davis	WSH	44	583	13.3	36.4	44	2	11
Taylor Gabriel	ATL	35	579	16.5	44.5	76	6	8
J.J. Nelson	ARI	34	568	16.7	37.9	80	6	9
Brian Quick	LA	41	564	13.8	35.3	65	3	7
C.J. Fiedorowicz	HOU	54	559	10.4	37.3	26	4	5
Charles Clay	BUF	57	552	9.7	36.8	40	4	4
James White	NE	60	551	9.2	34.4	61	5	5
Antonio Gates	SD	53	548	10.3	39.1	27	7	5
Rob Gronkowski	NE	25	540	21.6	67.5	53	3	12
Jeremy Maclin	KC	44	536	12.2	44.7	44	2	6
Chris Conley	KC	44	530	12.0	33.1	39	0	4
Phillip Dorsett	IND	33	528	16.0	35.2	64	2	8
Tajae Sharpe	TEN	41	522	12.7	32.6	34	2	7
John Brown	ARI	39	517	13.3	34.5	30	2	5
Duke Johnson Jr.	CLE	53	514	9.7	32.1	32	0	8
Jermaine Kearse	SEA	41	511	12.5	31.9	36	1	7
Tavon Austin	LA	58	509	8.8	33.9	43	3	6
Lance Kendricks	LA	50	499	10.0	31.2	44	2	7
Breshad Perriman	BAL	33	499	15.1	31.2	53	3	8
Zach Miller	CHI	47	486	10.3	48.6	34	4	5
Hunter Henry	SD	36	478	13.3	31.9	59	8	7
Allen Hurns	JAX	35	477	13.6	43.4	42	3	9
Devonta Freeman	ATL	54	462	8.6	28.9	35	2	3
Cordarrelle Patterson	MIN	52	453	8.7	28.3	39	2	4
Spencer Ware	KC	33	447	13.5	31.9	46	2	8
Michael Floyd	NE/ARI	33	446	13.5	34.3	39	4	4
Ryan Griffin	HOU	50	442	8.8	27.6	45	2	4
Sammie Coates	PIT	21	435	20.7	31.1	72	2	7
Marquise Goodwin	BUF	29	431	14.9	28.7	84	3	3
Sammy Watkins	BUF	28	430	15.4	53.8	62	2	4
Darren Sproles	PHI	52	427	8.2	28.5	73	2	2
Tevin Coleman	ATL	31	421	13.6	32.4	49	3	8
Melvin Gordon	SD	41	419	10.2	32.2	35	2	4
Kendall Wright	TEN	29	416	14.3	37.8	48	3	6
Corey Coleman	CLE	33	413	12.5	41.3	58	3	4

T.Y. HILTON

PLAYER	TEAM	REC	YDS	YPC	YPG	LONG	TD	20+
Quinton Patton	SF	37	408	11.0	29.1	45	0	4
Dwayne Allen	IND	35	406	11.6	29.0	23	6	4
Malcolm Mitchell	NE	32	401	12.5	28.6	56	4	6
Seth Roberts	OAK	38	397	10.4	24.8	41	5	5
Will Tye	NYG	48	395	8.2	24.7	27	1	3
Tyler Eifert	CIN	29	394	13.6	49.3	71	5	6
Dorial Green-Beckham	PHI	36	392	10.9	26.1	26	2	5
Jermaine Gresham	ARI	37	391	10.6	24.4	34	2	4
Vance McDonald	SF	24	391	16.3	35.5	75	4	6
Bilal Powell	NYJ	58	388	6.7	24.3	22	2	1
Jared Cook	GB	30	377	12.6	37.7	47	1	6
DeMarco Murray	TEN	53	377	7.1	23.6	35	3	2
Theo Riddick	DET	53	371	7.0	37.1	23	5	2
Devin Funchess	CAR	23	371	16.1	24.7	48	4	8
Eddie Royal	CHI	33	369	11.2	41.0	64	2	3
Nelson Agholor	PHI	36	365	10.1	24.3	40	2	3
Ezekiel Elliott	DAL	32	363	11.3	24.2	83	1	3
Clive Walford	OAK	33	359	10.9	23.9	31	3	3
LeSean McCoy	BUF	50	356	7.1	23.7	41	1	2
Garrett Celek	SF	29	350	12.1	21.9	31	3	4
Chris Thompson	WSH	49	349	7.1	21.8	38	2	2
Ty Montgomery	GB	44	348	7.9	23.2	24	0	1
Russell Shepard	TB	23	341	14.8	24.4	24	2	5
Jesse James	PIT	39	338	8.7	21.1	24	3	2
Giovani Bernard	CIN	39	336	8.6	33.6	32	1	3
Kamar Aiken	BAL	29	328	11.3	20.5	29	1	3
Trey Burton	PHI	37	327	8.8	21.8	32	1	1
Todd Gurley	LA	43	327	7.6	20.4	33	0	5
Andrew Hawkins	CLE	33	324	9.8	20.3	33	3	5
Aldrick Robinson	ATL	20	323	16.2	20.2	59	2	6
Mark Ingram	NO	46	319	6.9	19.9	22	4	4
Isaiah Crowell	CLE	40	319	8.0	19.9	44	0	2
T.J. Yeldon	JAX	50	312	6.2	20.8	17	1	0

2020 ALL-PRO TEAM

The NFL is just a few years away from celebrating its 100th anniversary. To get the party started early, we're looking at players we believe will be tops at each position during the 2020 season (positions designated per Associated Press All-Pro team).

ODELL BECKHAM JR.

QUARTERBACK: Tom Brady, Patriots
This selection is as much out of respect as tongue-in-cheek for a future Hall of Famer who has said he wants to play until he's 45 years old. Although he would be 43 entering the 2020 campaign, the possibility of Brady continuing to play at an elite level and adding to his collection of five Super Bowl wins can't be dismissed.

RUNNING BACK: Saquon Barkley, Penn State
No knock on Zeke Elliott or David Johnson, but the rough-and-tumble nature of this position stacks the odds against today's stars still playing at the same high level in 2020. Enter Barkley, the Nittany Lions standout with a 4.33-second 40-yard dash who is expected to enter the 2018 NFL Draft.

WIDE RECEIVERS: Odell Beckham Jr., Giants; Corey Davis, Titans
By this time, Beckham should be past the maturity issues that are the only thing holding him back from true greatness. Davis, the all-time FBS leader in receiving yards (5,285) at Western Michigan, will continue his success in Tennessee.

TIGHT END: O.J. Howard, Buccaneers
Buccaneers head coach Dirk Koetter loves using his tight end. That's great news for Howard, who was underutilized at Alabama.

FLEX: Tyreek Hill, Chiefs
Chiefs head coach Andy Reid plans to double Hill's offensive workload this season after the fleet wide receiver exploded onto the scene in 2016. Hill accounted for 12 touchdowns as a rookie while emerging as the NFL's most dangerous returner.

LEFT TACKLE: Tyron Smith, Cowboys
One of the NFL's best left tackles in 2017 will be *the* best in 2020. Smith will only be 29 at that time because he entered the league at such a young age in 2011.

LEFT GUARD: Kelechi Osemele, Raiders
Even in his early 30s, Osemele should still be mowing down opposing defenders.

CENTER: Travis Frederick, Cowboys
A combination of smarts and being an equally adept run and pass blocker makes Frederick elite — now and into the future.

RIGHT GUARD: Zack Martin, Cowboys
The first offensive lineman in 67 years to make the Associated Press All-Pro team as a rookie in 2014 won't be relinquishing that spot any time soon.

RIGHT TACKLE: Jack Conklin, Titans
Conklin needed no time to flourish with the Titans, earning All-Pro honors as a rookie in 2016. Philadelphia's Lane Johnson is another strong contender, but he may be shifted to left tackle by 2020 to replace Jason Peters.

EDGE RUSHERS: Joey Bosa, Chargers; Myles Garrett, Browns
After a slow start because of a rookie contract holdout, Bosa caught fire to become 2016 NFL Defensive Rookie of the Year. Garrett, selected first overall by Cleveland in this year's draft, has all the earmarks of becoming an elite pass rusher.

INTERIOR LINEMEN: Aaron Donald, Rams; Solomon Thomas, 49ers
Donald will be 29 in 2020 but should still have the same burst that gives opposing offensive linemen fits. Thomas, the No. 3 pick by San Francisco in this year's draft, has many of the same physical gifts as Donald, only with more size.

LINEBACKERS: Luke Kuechly, Panthers; Kwon Alexander, Buccaneers; Shane Ray, Broncos
Here's hoping a player who's as fun to watch as Kuechly is still going strong despite concussions that forced him to miss nine games the past two seasons. Alexander, who turned 23 in August, already has 238 career tackles. By 2020, Ray will have grabbed the torch from Von Miller as Denver's top sack artist.

CORNERBACKS: Marcus Peters, Chiefs; Jalen Ramsey, Jaguars
Peters already has 14 career interceptions at age 24. Ramsey will continue flourishing in Jacksonville after leading all rookies in 2016 with 16 passes defensed.

SAFETIES: Landon Collins, Giants; Keanu Neal, Falcons
Collins, who will be 26 for the 2020 season, showcased speed and football savvy in his breakthrough 2016 campaign. Neal is the second coming of Seattle safety Kam Chancellor.

DEFENSIVE BACK: Jamal Adams, Jets
The son of a former Giants running back, Adams has such a good feel for the game that he can play either safety spot as well as cover tight ends and slot receivers.

JALEN RAMSEY

Beckham: Rob Leiter via Getty Images; Ramsey: Harrison McClary/Athlon Sports

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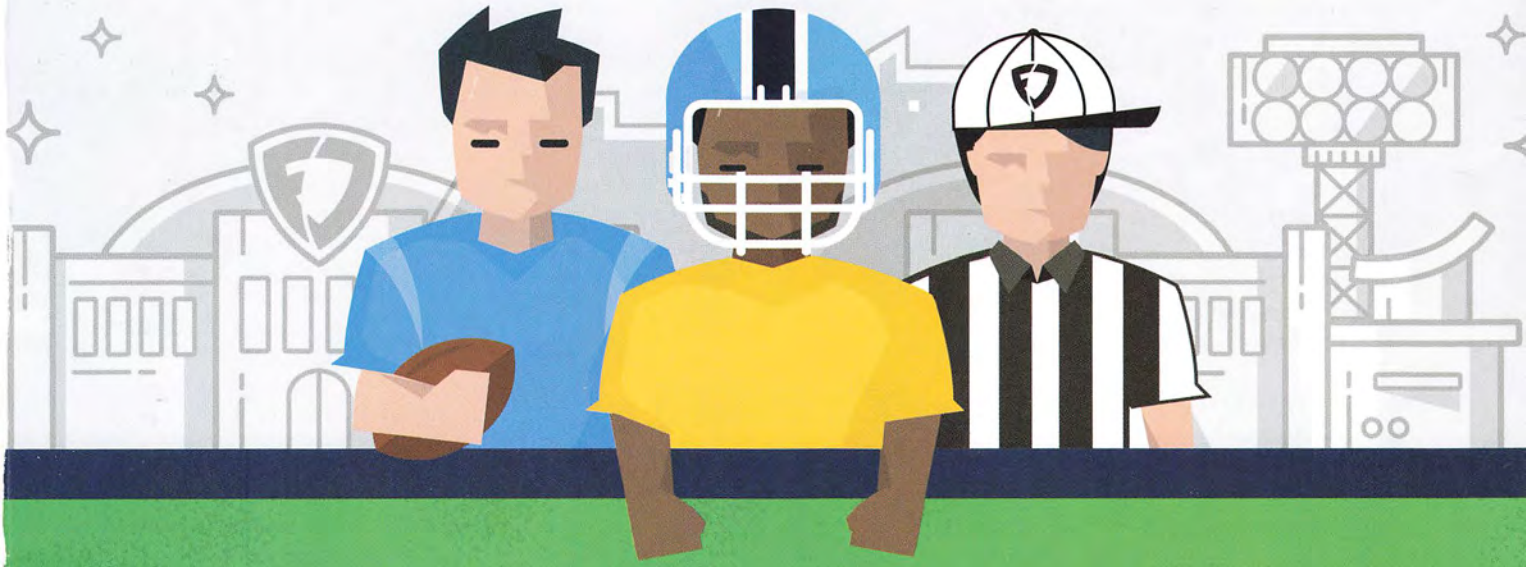

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